

LONDON SOCIETY.

DECEMBER, 1872.

A SIMPLETON.

A Story of the Day.

BY CHARLES READE.

[At the Author's particular request this story is not illustrated.]

CHAPTER VII.

CHRISTOPHER STAINES came back, looking pained and disturbed. 'There,' said he, 'I feared it would come to this. I have quarrelled with Uncle Philip.'

'Oh! how could you?'

'He affronted me.'

'What about?'

'Never you mind. Don't let us say anything more about it, darling. It is a pity, a sad pity—he was a good friend of mine once.'

He paused, entered what had passed, in his diary, and then sat down, with a gentle expression of sadness on his manly features. Rosa hung about him, soft and pitying, till it cleared away, at all events for the time.

Next day they went together to clear the goods Rosa had purchased. Whilst the list was being made out in the office, in came the fair-haired boy, with a ten-pound note in his very hand. Rosa caught sight of it, and turned to the auctioneer, with a sweet, pitying face: 'Oh! sir, surely you will not take all that money from him, poor child, for a rickety old chair.'

The auctioneer stared with amazement at her simplicity, and

said, 'What would the vendors say to me?'

She looked distressed, and said, 'Well, then, really we ought to raise a subscription, poor thing!'

'Why, ma'am,' said the auctioneer, 'he isn't hurt: the article belonged to his mother and her sister; the brother-in-law isn't on good terms; so he demanded a public sale. She will get back four pun ten out of it.' Here the clerk put in his word. 'And there's five pounds paid, I forgot to tell you.'

'Oh! left a deposit, did he?'

'No, sir. But the laughing Hyena gave you five pounds at the end of the sale.'

'The laughing Hyena, Mr. Jones?'

'Oh! beg pardon: that is what we call him in the room. He has got such a curious laugh.'

'Oh! I know the gent. He is a retired doctor. I wish he'd laugh less, and buy more: and he gave you five pounds towards the young gentleman's arm-chair! Well, I should as soon have expected blood from a flint. You have got five pounds to pay, sir: so now the chair will cost your

mámma ten shillings. Give him the order and the change, Mr. Jones.'

Christopher and Rosa talked this over in the room whilst the men were looking out their purchases. 'Come,' said Rosa; 'now I forgive him sneering at me; his heart is not really hard, you see.' Staines, on the contrary, was very angry. 'What! he cried, 'pity a boy who made one bad bargain, that, after all, was not a very bad bargain; and he had no kindness, nor even common humanity, for my beautiful Rosa, inexperienced as a child, and buying for her husband, like a good, affectionate, honest creature, amongst a lot of sharpers and hard-hearted cynics—like himself.'

'It was cruel of him,' said Rosa, altering her mind in a moment, and half inclined to cry.

This made Christopher furious. 'The ill-natured, crotchety, old—the fact is he is a misogynist.'

'Oh, the wretch!' said Rosa, warmly. 'And what is that?'

'A woman-hater.'

'Oh! is that all? Why, so do I—after that Florence Cole. Women are mean, heartless things. Give me men; they are loyal and true.'

'All of them?' inquired Christopher, a little satirically. 'Read the papers?'

'Every soul of them,' said Mrs. Staines, passing loftily over the proposed test. 'That is, all the ones I care about; and that is my own, own one.'

Disagreeable creatures to have about one—these simpletons!

Mrs. Staines took Christopher to shops, to buy the remaining requisites: and in three days more the house was furnished, two female servants engaged, and the couple took their luggage over to the Bijou.

Rosa was excited and happy at

the novelty of possession, and authority, and that close sense of house proprietorship which belongs to woman. By dinner-time she could have told you how many shelves there were in every cupboard, and knew the Bijou by heart in a way that Christopher never knew it. All this ended, as running about and excitement generally does, with my lady being exhausted, and lax with fatigue. So then he made her lie down on a little couch, while he went through his accounts.

When he had examined all the bills carefully he looked very grave, and said, 'Who would believe this? We began with 3,000*l.* It was to last us several years—till I got a good practice. Rosa, there is only 1,440*l.* left.'

'Oh, impossible!' said Rosa. 'Oh, dear! why did I ever enter a sale-room?'

'No, no, my darling; you were bitten once or twice, but you made some good bargains too. Remember there was 400*l.* set apart for my life policy.'

'What a waste of money!'

'Your father did not think so. Then the lease; the premium; repairs of the drains that would have poisoned my Rosa; turning the coach-house into a dispensary; painting, papering, and furnishing; china, and linen, and everything to buy. We must look at this seriously. Only 1,440*l.* left. A slow profession. No friends. I have quarrelled with Uncle Philip: you with Mrs. Cole; and her husband would have launched me.'

'And it was to please her we settled here. Oh, I could kill her: nasty cat!'

'Never mind; it is not a case for despondency, but it is for prudence. All we have to do is to look the thing in the face, and be very economical in everything. I had

better give you an allowance for housekeeping; and I earnestly beg you to buy things yourself whilst you are a poor man's wife, and pay ready money for everything. My mother was a great manager, and she always said, "There is but one way: be your own market-woman, and pay on the spot; never let the tradesmen get you on their books, or, what with false weight, double charges, and the things your servants order that never enter the house, you lose more than a hundred a year by cheating."

Rosa yielded a languid assent to this part of his discourse, and it hardly seemed to enter her mind; but she raised no objection; and in due course he made her a special allowance for house-keeping.

It soon transpired that medical advice was to be had, gratis, at the Bijou, from eight till ten, and there was generally a good attendance. But a week passed, and not one patient came of the class this couple must live by. Christopher set this down to what people call 'the Transition period:' his Kent patients had lost him; his London patients not found him. He wrote to all his patients in the country, and many of his pupils at the university, to let them know where he was settled: and then he waited.

Not a creature came.

Rosa bore this very well for a time, so long as the house was a novelty; but, when that excitement was worn out, she began to be very dull, and used to come and entice him out to walk with her: he would look wistfully at her, but object, that, if he left the house, he should be sure to lose a patient.

'Oh! they won't come any more for our staying in — tiresome things!' said Rosa.

But Christopher would kiss her, and remain firm. 'My love,' said he, 'you do not realize how hard a fight there is before us. How should you? You are very young. No, for your sake, I must not throw a chance away. Write to your female friends: that will while away an hour or two.'

'What, after that Florence Cole?'

'Write to those who have not made such violent professions.'

'So I will, dear. Especially to those that are married and come to London. Oh, and I'll write to that cold-blooded thing, Lady Cicely Treherne. Why do you shake your head?'

'Did I? I was not aware. Well, dear; if ladies of rank were to come here, I fear they might make you discontented with your lot.'

'All the women on earth could not do that. However, the chances are she will not come near me: she left the school quite a big girl, an immense girl, when I was only twelve. She used to smile at my capriccios; and once she kissed me—actually. She was an awful sawny, though, and so affected: I think I will write to her.'

These letters brought just one lady, a Mrs. Turner, who talked to Rosa very glibly about herself, and amused Rosa twice: at the third visit, Rosa tried to change the conversation. Mrs. Turner instantly got up, and went away. She could not bear the sound of the human voice, unless it was talking about her and her affairs.

And now Staines began to feel downright uneasy. Income was going steadily out: not a shilling coming in. The lame, the blind, and the sick, frequented his dispensary, and got his skill out of him gratis, and sometimes a little physic, a little wine, and other things that cost him money: but,

of the patients that pay, not one came to his front door.

He walked round and round his little yard, like a hyena in its cage, waiting, waiting, waiting: and oh! how he envied the lot of those, who can hunt for work, instead of having to stay at home, and wait for others to come, whose will they cannot influence. His heart began to sicken with hope deferred, and dim forebodings of the future; and he saw, with grief, that his wife was getting duller and duller, and that her days dragged more heavily far than his own; for he could study.

At last his knocker began to show signs of life: his visitors were physicians. His lectures on 'Diagnosis,' were well known to them; and one after another found him out. They were polite, kind, even friendly; but here it ended: these gentlemen, of course, did not resign their patients to him; and the inferior class of practitioners avoided his door like a pestilence.

Mrs. Staines, who had always lived for amusement, could strike out no fixed occupation; her time hung like lead; the house was small; and, in small houses, the faults of servants run against the mistress, and she can't help seeing them, and all the worse for her. It is easier to keep things clean in the country, and Rosa had a high standard, which her two servants could never quite attain. This annoyed her, and she began to scold a little. They answered civilly, but, in other respects, remained imperfect beings; they laid out every shilling they earned in finery; and this, I am ashamed to say, irritated Mrs. Staines, who was wearing out her wedding garments, and had no excuse for buying, and Staines had begged her to be economical. The more they dressed, the more she scolded;

they began to answer. She gave the cook warning; the other, though not on good terms with the cook, had a gush of *esprit du corps* directly, and gave Mrs. Staines warning.

Mrs. Staines told her husband all this: he took her part, though without openly interfering; and they had two new servants, not so good as the last.

This worried Rosa sadly; but it was a fleabite to the deeper nature, and more forecasting mind of her husband, still doomed to pace that miserable yard, like a hyena, chafing, seeking, longing for the patient that never came.

Rosa used to look out of his dressing-room window, and see him pace the yard. At first, tears of pity stood in her eyes. By-and-by she got angry with the world; and at last, strange to say, a little irritated with him. It is hard for a weak woman to keep up all her respect for the man that fails.

One day, after watching him a long time unseen, she got excited, put on her shawl and bonnet, and ran down to him: she took him by the arm; 'If you love me, come out of this prison, and walk with me; we are too miserable. I shall be your first patient if this goes on much longer.' He looked at her, saw she was very excited, and had better be humoured; so he kissed her, and just said, with a melancholy smile, 'How poor are they that have not patience.' Then he put on his hat, and walked in the Park, and Kensington Gardens, with her. The season was just beginning. There were carriages enough, and gay Amazons enough, to make poor Rosa sigh more than once.

Christopher heard the sigh; and pressed her arm, and said 'Courage, love, I hope to see you among them yet.'

'The sooner the better,' said she, a little hardly.

'And, meantime, which of them all is as beautiful as you?'

'All I know is, they are more attractive. Who looks at me? walking tamely by.'

Christopher said nothing: but these words seemed to imply a thirst for admiration, and made him a little uneasy.

By-and-by the walk put the swift-changing Rosa in spirits, and she began to chat gaily, and hung prattling and beaming on her husband's arm, when they entered Curzon Street. Here, however, occurred an incident, trifling in itself, but unpleasant. Dr. Staines saw one of his best Kentish patients get feebly out of his carriage, and call on Dr. Barr. He started, and stopped. Rosa asked what was the matter. He told her. She said '*We are unfortunate.*'

Staines said nothing; he only quickened his pace; but he was greatly disturbed. She expected him to complain that she had dragged him out, and lost him that first chance. But he said nothing. When they got home, he asked the servant had anybody called.

'No, sir.'

'Surely you are mistaken, Jane. A gentleman in a carriage!'

'Not a creature have been since you went out, sir.'

'Well then, dearest,' said he, sweetly, 'we have nothing to reproach ourselves with. Then he knit his brow gloomily. It is worse than I thought. It seems even one's country patients go to another doctor when they visit London. It is hard. It is hard.'

Rosa leaned her head on his shoulder, and curled round him, as one she would shield against the world's injustice; but she said nothing; she was a little

frightened at his eye that lowered, and his noble frame that trembled a little, with ire suppressed.

Two days after this, a brougham drove up to the door, and a tallish, fattish, pasty-faced man got out, and inquired for Dr. Staines.

He was shown into the dining-room, and told Jane he had come to consult the doctor.

Rosa had peeped over the stairs, all curiosity; she glided noiselessly down, and with love's swift foot got into the yard before Jane. 'He is come! he is come! Kiss me.'

Dr. Staines kissed her first, and then asked who was come.

'Oh, nobody of any consequence. Only the first patient. Kiss me again.'

Dr. Staines kissed her again, and then was for going to the first patient.

'No,' said she; 'not yet. I met a doctor's wife at Dr. Mayne's, and she told me things. You must always keep them waiting; or else they think nothing of you. Such a funny woman! "*Treat 'em like dogs, my dear,*" she said. but I told her they wouldn't come to be treated like dogs or any other animal.'

'You had better have kept that to yourself,' I think.

'Oh! if you are going to be disagreeable, good-bye. You can go to your patient, sir. Christie, dear, if he is very—very ill—and I'm sure I hope he is—oh, how wicked I am; may I have a new bonnet?'

'If you really want one.'

On the patient's card was 'Mr. Pettigrew, 47, Manchester Square.'

As soon as Staines entered the room, the first patient told him who, and what, he was, a retired civilian from India; but he had got a son there still, a very rising man; wanted to be a parson; but

he would not stand that; bad profession; don't rise by merit; very hard to rise at all;—no, India was the place. 'As for me, I made my fortune there in ten years. Obligated to leave it now—invalid this many years; no *tone*. Tried two or three doctors in this neighbourhood; heard there was a new one, had written a book on something. Thought I would try *him*.'

To stop him, Staines requested to feel his pulse, and examine his tongue and eye.

'You are suffering from indigestion,' said he. 'I will write you a prescription; but, if you want to get well, you must simplify your diet very much.'

While he was writing the prescription, off went this patient's tongue, and ran through the topics of the day, and into his family history again.

Staines listened politely. He could afford it, having only this one.

At last, the first patient, having delivered an 8vo. vol. of nothing, rose to go; but it seems that speaking an 'infinite deal of nothing' exhausts the body, though it does not affect the mind; for the first patient sank down in his chair again. 'I have excited myself too much—feel rather faint.'

Staines saw no signs of coming syncope; he rang the bell quietly, and ordered a decanter of sherry to be brought; the first patient filled himself a glass; then another; and went off, revived, to chatter elsewhere. But, at the door, he said, 'I had always a running account with Dr. Mivar. I suppose you don't object to that system. Double fee the first visit, single afterwards.'

Dr. Staines bowed a little stiffly; he would have preferred the money. However, he looked at the Blue Book, and found his visitor lived

at 47, Manchester Square; so that removed his anxiety.

The first patient called every other day, chattered nineteen to the dozen, was exhausted, drank two glasses of sherry, and drove away.

Soon after this a second patient called. This one was a deputy patient—Collett, a retired butler—kept a lodging-house, and waited at parties; he lived close by, but had a married daughter in Chelsea. Would the doctor visit her, and he would be responsible?

Staines paid the woman a visit or two, and treated her so effectually, that soon her visits were paid to him. She was cured, and Staines, who by this time wanted to see money, sent to Collett.

Collett did not answer.

Staines wrote warmly.

Collett dead silent.

Staines employed a solicitor.

Collett said he had recommended the patient, that was all. He had never said he would pay her debts. That was her husband's business.

Now her husband was the mate of a ship; would not be in England for eighteen months.

The woman, visited by lawyer's clerk, cried bitterly, and said she and her children had scarcely enough to eat.

Lawyer advised Staines to abandon the case, and pay him two pounds fifteen shillings, expenses. He did so.

'This is damnable,' said he. 'I must get it out of Pettigrew; by-the-by, he has not been here this two days.'

He waited another day for Pettigrew, and then wrote to him. No answer. Called. Pettigrew gone abroad. House in Manchester Square to let.

Staines went to the house-agent with his tale. Agent was impenetrable at first; but at last, won by

the doctor's manner and his unhappiness, referred him to Pettigrew's solicitor; the solicitor was a respectable man, and said he would forward the claim to Pettigrew in Paris.

But, by this time, Pettigrew was chatting and guzzling in Berlin; and thence he got to St. Petersburg. In that stronghold of gluttony he gourmandized more than ever, and, being unable to chatter it off his stomach, as in other cities, had apoplexy, and died.

But, long before this, Staines saw his money was as irrecoverable as his sherry; and he said to Rosa, 'I wonder whether I shall ever live to curse the human race?'

'Heaven forbid!' said Rosa. 'Oh, they use you cruelly, my poor, poor Christie!'

Thus for months the young Doctor's patients bled him, and that was all.

And Rosa got more and more moped at being in the house so much, and pestered Christopher to take her out, and he declined; and, being a man hard to beat, took to writing on medical subjects, in hopes of getting some money from the various medical and scientific publications; but he found it as hard to get the wedge in there as to get patients.

At last Rosa's remonstrances began to rise into something that sounded like reproaches. One Sunday she came to him in her bonnet, and interrupted his studies, to say he might as well lay down the pen and talk. Nobody would publish anything he wrote.

Christopher frowned, but contained himself; and laid down the pen.

'I might as well as not be married at all as be a doctor's wife. You are never seen out with me, not even to church. Do behave like a Christian, and come to church with me, now.'

Dr. Staines shook his head.

'Why, I wouldn't miss church for all the world. Any excitement is better than always moping. Come over the water with me. The time Jane and I went the clergyman read a paper that Mr. Brown had fallen down in a fit. There was such a rush directly, and I'm sure fifty ladies went out—fancy, all Mrs. Browns! Wasn't that fun?'

'Fun? I don't see it. Well, Rosa, your mind is, evidently, better adapted to diversion than mine is. Go you to church, love, and I'll continue my studies.'

'Then all I can say is, I wish I was back in my father's house. Husband! friend! companion!—I have none.'

Then she burst out crying violently; and, being shocked at what she had said, and at the agony it had brought into her husband's face, she went off into hysterics; and, as his heart would not let him bellow at her, or empty a bucket on her as he could on another patient, she had a good long bout of them, and got her way; for she broke up his studies for that day, at all events.

Even after the hysterics were got under, she continued to moan and sigh very prettily, with her lovely, languid head pillowed on her husband's arm; in a word, though the hysterics were real, yet this innocent young person had the presence of mind to postpone entire convalescence, and lay herself out to be petted all day. But fate willed it otherwise. While she was sighing and moaning, came to the door a scurrying of feet; and then a sharp, persistent ringing that meant something. The moaner cocked eye and ear, and said, in her every-day voice, which, coming so suddenly, sounded very dull, 'What is that, I wonder?'

Jane hurried to the street door, and Rosa recovered by magic; and, preferring gossip to hysterics, in an almost gleeful whisper ordered Christopher to open the door of the study. The Bijou was so small that the following dialogue rang in their ears:

A boy in buttons gasped out, 'Oh, if you please, will you ast the doctor to come round directly; there's a haccident.'

'La, bless me!' said Jane; and never budged.

'Yes, miss. It's our missus's little girl fallen right off an i chair, and cut her head dreadful, and smothered in blood.'

'La, to be sure!' And she waited steadily for more.

'Ay, and missus she fainted right off; and I've been to the regler doctor, which he's out; and Sarah, the housemaid, said I had better come here; you was only just set up, she said; you wouldn't have so much to do, says she.'

'That is all she knows,' said Sarah. 'Why, our master they pulls him in pieces which is to have him fust.'

'What an awful liar! Oh, you good girl!' whispered Dr. Staines and Rosa in one breath.

'Ah, well,' said Buttons; 'any way, Sarah says she knows you are clever, 'cos her little girl as lives with her mother, and calls Sarah aunt, has bin to your 'spensary with ringworm, and you cured her right off.'

'Ay, and a good many more,' said Jane, loftily. She was a housemaid of imagination; and, while Staines was putting some lint and an instrument case into his pocket, she proceeded to relate a number of miraculous cures. Doctor Staines interrupted them by suddenly emerging, and inviting Buttons to take him to the house.

Mrs. Staines was so pleased with Jane for cracking up the Doctor, that she gave her five shillings; and after that used to talk to her a great deal more than to the cook, which in due course set all three by the ears.

Buttons took the Doctor to a fine house in the same street, and told him his mistress's name on the way—Mrs. Lucas. He was taken up to the nursery, and found Mrs. Lucas seated, crying and lamenting, and a woman holding a little girl of about seven, whose brow had been cut open by the fender, on which she had fallen from a chair; it looked very ugly, and was even now bleeding.

Dr. Staines lost no time; he examined the wound keenly, and then said kindly to Mrs. Lucas, 'I am happy to tell you it is not serious.' He then asked for a large basin and some tepid water, and bathed it so softly and soothingly that the child soon became composed; and the mother discovered the artist at once. He compressed the wound, and explained to Mrs. Lucas that the principal thing really was to avoid an ugly scar. 'There is no danger,' said he. He then bound the wound neatly up, and had the girl put to bed. 'You will not wake her at any particular hour, nurse. Let her sleep. Have a little strong beef-tea ready, and give it her at any hour, night or day, she asks for it. But do not force it on her, or you will do her more harm than good. She had better sleep before she eats.'

Mrs. Lucas begged him to come every morning; and, as he was going, she shook hands with him, and the soft palm deposited a hard substance wrapped in paper. He took it with professional gravity, and seeming unconsciousness; but, once outside the house,

went home on wings. He ran up to the drawing-room, and found his wife seated, and playing at reading. He threw himself on his knees, and the fee into her lap; and, while she unfolded the paper with an ejaculation of pleasure, he said, 'Darling, the first real patient—the first real fee. It is yours to buy the new bonnet.'

'Oh, I'm so glad,' said she, with her eyes glistening. 'But I'm afraid one can't get a bonnet fit to wear—for a guinea.'

Dr. Staines visited his little patient every day, and received his guinea. Mrs. Lucas also called him in for her own little ailments, and they were the best possible kind of ailments: being almost imaginary, there was no limit to them.

Then did Mrs. Staines turn jealous of her husband. 'They never ask me,' said she; 'and I am moped to death.'

'It is hard,' said Christopher, sadly. 'But have a little patience. Society will come to you long before practice comes to me.'

About two o'clock one afternoon a carriage and pair drove up, and a gorgeous footman delivered a card, 'Lady Cicely Treherne.'

Of course Mrs. Staines was at home, and only withheld by propriety from bounding into the passage to meet her schoolfellow. However, she composed herself in the drawing-room, and presently the door was opened, and a very tall young woman, richly, but not gaily dressed, drifted into the room, and stood there a statue of composure.

Rosa had risen to fly to her; but the reverence a girl of eighteen strikes into a child of twelve hung about her still, and she came timidly forward, blushing and sparkling, a curious contrast in colour and mind to her visitor; for Lady Cicely was Languor in person—her hair whitey-brown, her face a fine

oval, but almost colourless; her eyes a pale grey, her neck and hands incomparably white and beautiful—a lymphatic young lady, a live antidote to emotion. However, Rosa's beauty, timidity, and undisguised affectionateness were something so different from what she was used to in the world of fashion, that she actually smiled, and held out both her hands a little way. Rosa seized them, and pressed them; they let her, and remained passive and limp.

'Oh, Lady Cicely,' said Rosa, 'how kind of you to come.'

'How kind of you to send to me,' was the polite, but perfectly cool, reply. 'But how you are gowned, and—may I say improved?—you la petite Lusignan! It is incredible,' lisped her ladyship, very calmly.

'I was only a child,' said Rosa. 'You were always so beautiful and tall, and kind to a little monkey like me. Oh, pray sit down, Lady Cicely, and talk of old times.'

She drew her gently to the sofa, and they sat down hand in hand; but Lady Cicely's high-bred reserve made her a very poor gossip about anything that touched herself and her family; so Rosa, though no egotist, was drawn into talking about herself more than she would have done had she deliberately planned the conversation. But here was an old schoolfellow, and a singularly polite listener, and so out came her love, her genuine happiness, her particular griefs, and especially the crowning grievance, no society, moped to death, &c.

Lady Cicely could hardly understand the sentiment in a woman who so evidently loved her husband. 'Society!' said she, after due reflection, 'why, it is a bo.' (And here I may as well explain that Lady Cicely spoke certain words falsely, and others affect-

edly; and, as for the letter *r*, she could say it if she made a hearty effort, but was generally too lazy to throw her leg over it.) 'Society! I'm drenched to death with it. If I could only catch fish like other women, and love somebody, I would much rather have a *tête-à-tête* with him than go teawing about all day and all night, from one unintwisting crowd to another. To be sure,' said she, puzzling the matter out, 'you are a beauty, and would be more looked at.'

'The idea! and—oh no! no! it is not that. But even in the country we had always some society.'

'Well, dyar, believe me, with your appeawance, you can have as much society as you please; but it will boe you to death, as it does me, and then you will long to be left quiet with a sensible man who loves you.'

Said Rosa, 'When shall I have another *tête-à-tête* with you, I wonder? Oh, it has been such a comfort to me. Bless you for coming. There—I wrote to Cecilia, and Emily, and Mrs. Bosanquet that is now, and all my sworn friends, and to think of you being the one to come—you that never kissed me but once, and an earl's daughter into the bargain.'

'Ha! ha! ha!'—Lady Cicely actually laughed for once in a way, and did not feel the effort. 'As for kissing,' said she, 'if I fall shawt, fawgive me. I was nevaa vewy demonstrwative.'

'No; and I have had a lesson. That Florence Cole—Florence Whiting that was, you know—was always kissing me, and she has turned out a traitor. I'll tell you all about her.' And she did.

Lady Cicely thought Mrs. Staines a little too unreserved in her conversation; but was so charmed with her sweetness and freshness

that she kept up the acquaintance, and called on her twice a-week during the season. At first she wondered that her visits were not returned; but Rosa let out that she was ashamed to call on foot in Grosvenor Square.

Lady Cicely shrugged her beautiful shoulders a little at that; but she continued to do the visiting, and to enjoy the simple, innocent rapture with which she was received.

This lady's pronunciation of many words was false or affected. She said 'good murning' for 'good morning,' and turned other vowels into diphthongs, and played two or three pranks with her 'r's. But we cannot be all imperfect: with her pronunciation her folly came to a full stop. I really believe she lisped less nonsense and bad taste in a year than some of us articulate in a day. To be sure, folly is generally uttered in a hurry, and she was too deplorably lazy to speak fast on any occasion whatever.

One day Mrs. Staines took her upstairs, and showed her from the back window her husband pacing the yard, waiting for patients. Lady Cicely folded her arms, and contemplated him at first with a sort of zoological curiosity. Gentleman pacing back yard, like hyena, she had never seen before.

At last she opened her mouth in a whisper, 'What is he doing?'

'Waiting for patients.'

'Oh! Waiting—for—patients?'

'For patients that never come, and never will come.'

'Cuwious!—How little I know of life!'

'It is that all day, dear, or else writing.'

Lady Cicely, with her eyes fixed on Staines, made a motion with her hand that she was attending.

'And they won't publish a word he writes.'

'Poor man!'

'Nice for me; is it not?'

'I begin to understand,' said Lady Cicely, quietly; and soon after retired with her invariable composure.

Meantime, Dr. Staines, like a good husband, had thrown out occasional hints to Mrs. Lucas that he had a wife, beautiful, accomplished, moped. More than that, he went so far as to regret to her that Mrs. Staines, being in a neighbourhood new to him, saw so little society; the more so, as she was formed to shine, and had not been used to seclusion.

All these hints fell dead on Mrs. Lucas. A handsome and skilful doctor was welcome to her: his wife—that was quite another matter.

But one day Mrs. Lucas saw Lady Cicely Treherne's carriage standing at the door. The style of the whole turnout impressed her. She wondered whose it was.

On another occasion she saw it drive up, and the lady get out. She recognised her; and the very next day this *parvenue* said adroitly, 'Now, Dr. Staines, really you can't be allowed to hide your wife in this way. (Staines stared.) Why not introduce her to me next Wednesday?—It is my night. I would give a dinner expressly for her; but I don't like to do that, while my husband is in Naples.'

When Staines carried the invitation to his wife, she was delighted, and kissed him with childish frankness.

But the very next moment she became thoughtful, uneasy, depressed. 'Oh, dear, I've nothing to wear.'

'Oh, nonsense, Rosa. Your wedding outfit.'

'The ideal! I can't go as a bride. It's not a masquerade.'

'But you have other dresses.'

'All gone by, more or less; or

not fit for such parties as she gives. A hundred carriages!'

'Bring them down, and let me see them.'

'Oh, yes.' And the lady, who had nothing to wear, paraded a very fair show of dresses.

Staines saw something to admire in all of them. Mrs. Staines found more to object to in each.

At last he fell upon a silver-grey silk, of superlative quality.

'That! It is as old as the hills,' shrieked Rosa.

'It looks just out of the shop. Come, tell the truth; how often have you worn it?'

'I wore it before I was married.'

'Ay, but how often?'

'Twice. Three times, I believe.'

'I thought so. It is as good as new.'

'But I have had it so long by me. I had it two years before I made it up.'

'What does that matter? Do you think the people can tell how long a dress has been lurking in your wardrobe? This is childish, Rosa. There, with this dress as good as new, and your beauty, you will be as much admired, and perhaps hated, as your heart can desire.'

'I am afraid not,' said Rosa, naively. 'Oh, how I wish I had known a week ago.'

'I am very thankful you did not,' said Staines, drily.

At ten o'clock, Mrs. Staines was nearly dressed; at a quarter past ten she demanded ten minutes; at half-past ten she sought a reprieve; at a quarter to eleven, being assured that the street was full of carriages, which had put down at Mrs. Lucas's, she consented to emerge; and in a minute they were at the house.

They were shown first into a

cloak-room, and then into a tea-room, and then mounted the stairs. One servant took their names, and bawled them to another four yards off, he to another about as near, and so on; and they edged themselves into the room, not yet too crowded to move in.

They had not taken many steps, on the chance of finding their hostess, when a slight buzz arose, and seemed to follow them.

Rosa wondered what that was; but only for a moment; she observed a tall, stout, aquiline woman fix an eye of bitter, diabolical, malignant hatred on her; and, as she advanced, ugly noses were cocked disdainfully, and scraggy shoulders elevated at the risk of sending the bones through the leather, and a titter or two shot after her. A woman's instinct gave her the key at once; the sexes had complimented her at sight; each in their way; the men with respectful admiration; the women, with their inflammable jealousy, and ready hatred in another of the quality they value most in themselves. But the country girl was too many for them: she would neither see nor hear, but moved sedately on, and calmly crushed them with her southern beauty. Their dry, powdered faces could not live by the side of her glowing skin, with nature's delicate gloss upon it, and the rich blood mantling below it. The got-up beauties, *i.e.*, the majority, seemed literally to fade and wither as she passed.

Mrs. Lucas got to her, suppressed a slight maternal pang, having daughters to marry, and took her line in a moment; here was a decoy duck. Mrs. Lucas was all graciousness, made acquaintance, and took a little turn with her, introducing her to one or two persons; among the rest, to the malignant woman, Mrs. Barr. Mrs. Barr, on

this, ceased to look daggers, and substituted icicles; but, on the hateful beauty moving away, dropped the icicles, and resumed the poniards.

The rooms filled; the heat became oppressive, and the mixed odours of flowers, scents, and perspiring humanity, sickening. Some, unable to bear it, trickled out of the room, and sat all down the stairs.

Rosa began to feel faint. Up came a tall, sprightly girl, whose pertness was redeemed by a certain *bonhomie*, and said, 'Mrs. Staines, I believe? I am to make myself agreeable to you. That is the order from head-quarters.'

'Miss Lucas,' said Staines.

She jerked a little off-hand bow to him, and said, 'Will you trust her to me for five minutes?'

'Certainly.' But he did not much like it.

Miss Lucas carried her off, and told Dr. Staines, over her shoulder, now he could flirt to his heart's content.

'Thank you,' said he, drily. 'I'll await your return.'

'Oh, there are some much greater flirts here than I am,' said the ready Miss Lucas; and, whispering something in Mrs. Staines's ear, suddenly glided with her behind a curtain, pressed a sort of button fixed to a looking-glass door. The door opened, and behold they were in a delicious place, for which I can hardly find a word, since it was a boudoir and a conservatory in one: a large octagon, the walls lined from floor to ceiling with looking-glasses of moderate width, at intervals, and with creepers that covered the intervening spaces of the wall, and were trained so as to break the outline of the glasses, without greatly clouding the reflection. Ferns, in great variety, were grouped in a deep crescent, and

in the bight of this green bay were a small table and chairs. As there were no hot-house plants, the temperature was very cool, compared with the reeking oven they had escaped; and a little fountain bubbled, and fed a little meandering gutter that trickled away among the ferns; it ran crystal clear over little bright pebbles and shells. It did not always run, you understand; but Miss Lucas turned a secret tap, and started it.

'Oh, how heavenly!' said Rosa, with a sigh of relief; 'and how good of you to bring me here.'

'Yes; by rights I ought to have waited till you fainted. But there is no making acquaintance among all those people. Mamma will ask such crowds; one is like a fly in a glue-pot.'

Miss Lucas had good nature, smartness, and animal spirits; hence arose a vivacity and fluency that were often amusing, and passed for very clever. Reserve she had none; would talk about strangers, or friends, herself, her mother, her God, and the last buffoon-singer, in a breath. At a hint from Rosa, she told her who the lady in the pink dress was, and the lady in the violet velvet, and so on; for each lady was defined by her dress, and, more or less, quizzed by this show-woman, not exactly out of malice, but because it is smarter and more natural to decry than to praise, and a little *médiance* is the spice to gossip, belongs to it, as mint-sauce to lamb. So they chattered away, and were pleased with each other, and made friends, and there, in cool grot, quite forgot the sufferings of their fellow-creatures in the adjacent Turkish bath, ye!pt Society. It was Rosa who first recollected herself. 'Will not Mrs. Lucas be angry with me, if I keep you all to myself?'

'Oh, no; but I am afraid we must go into the hothouse again. I like the greenhouse best, with such a nice companion.'

They slipped noiselessly into the throng again, and wriggled about, Miss Lucas presenting her new friend to several ladies and gentlemen.

Presently Staines found them, and then Miss Lucas wriggled away; and, in due course, the room was thinned by many guests driving off home, or to balls, and other receptions, and Dr. Staines and Mrs. Staines went home to the Bijou. Here the physician prescribed bed; but the lady would not hear of such a thing, until she had talked it all over. So they compared notes, and Rosa told him how well she had got on with Miss Lucas, and made a friendship. 'But for that,' said she, 'I should be sorry I went among those people, such a dowdy.'

'Dowdy!' said Staines. 'Why you stormed the town; you were the great success of the night, and, for all I know, of the season.' The wretch delivered this with unbecoming indifference.

'It is too bad to mock me, Christie. Where were your eyes?'

'To the best of my recollection they were one on each side of my nose.'

'Yes, but some people are eyes, and no eyes.'

'I scorn the imputation; try me.'

'Very well. Then did you see that lady in sky-blue silk, embroidered with flowers and flounced with white velvet, and the corsage point lace; and oh, such emeralds?'

'I did; a tall, skinny woman, with eyes resembling her jewels in colour, though not in brightness.'

'Never mind her eyes; it is

her dress I am speaking of. Exquisite; and what a coiffure! Well, did you see *her* in the black velvet, trimmed so deep with Chantilly lace, wave on wave, and her head-dress of crimson flowers, and such a *rivière* of diamonds; oh, dear! oh, dear!

'I did, love. The room was an oven, but her rubicund face and suffocating costume made it seem a furnace.'

'Stuff! Well, did you see the lady in the corn-coloured silk, and poppies in her hair?'

'Of course I did. Ceres in person. She made me feel very hot, too; but I cooled myself at her pale, sickly face.'

'Never mind their faces; that is not the point.'

'Oh, excuse me; it is always a point with us benighted males, all eyes and no eyes.'

'Well, then, the lady in white, with cherry-velvet bands, and a white tunic looped with crimson, and head-dress of white illusion, à la vierge, I think they call it.'

'It was very refreshing; and adapted to that awful atmosphere. It was the nearest approach to nudity I ever saw, even amongst fashionable people.'

'It was lovely; and then that superb figure in white illusion and gold, with all those narrow flounces over her slip of white silk *glacé*, and a wreath of white flowers, with gold wheat-ears amongst them, in her hair; and oh! oh! oh! her pearls, Oriental, and as big as almonds!'

'And oh! oh! oh! her nose! reddish, and as long as a wood-cock's.'

'Noses! noses! stupid! That is not what strikes you first in a woman dressed like an angel.'

'Well, if you were to run up against that one, as I nearly did, her nose *would* be the thing that would strike you first. Nose!

it was a rostrum! the spear-head of Goliath.

'Now, don't, Christopher. This is no laughing matter. Do you mean you were not ashamed of your wife? I waa.'

'No, I was not; you had but one rival; a very young lady, wise before her age; a blonde, with violet eyes. She was dressed in light mauve-coloured silk, without a single flounce, or any other tomfoolery to fritter away the sheen and colour of an exquisite material; her sunny hair was another wave of colour, wreathed with a thin line of white jessamine flowers closely woven, that scented the air. This girl was the moon of that assembly, and you were the sun.'

'I never even saw her.'

'Eyes, and [no eyes. She saw you, and said, 'Oh, what a beautiful creature!' for I heard her. As for the old stagers, whom you admire so, their faces were all clogged with powder, the pores stopped up, the true texture of the skin abolished. They looked downright nasty, whenever you or or that young girl passed by them. Then it was you saw to what a frightful extent women are got up in our day, even young women, and respectable women. No, Rosa, dress can do little for you; you have beauty—real beauty.'

'Beauty! That passes unnoticed, unless one is well dressed.'

'Then what an obscure pair the Apollo Belvidere and the Venus de Medicis must be.'

'Oh! they are dressed—in marble.'

Christopher Staines then smiled.

'Well done,' said he, admiringly.

'That is a knock-down blow. So now you have silenced your husband, go you to bed directly. I can't afford you diamonds; so I will take care of that little insignificant trifle, your beauty.'

Mrs. Staines and Mrs. Lucas exchanged calls, and soon Mrs. Staines could no longer complain she was out of the world. Mrs. Lucas invited her to every party, because her beauty was an instrument of attraction she knew how to use; and Miss Lucas took a downright fancy to her; drove her in the Park, and on Sundays to the Zoological Gardens, just beginning to be fashionable.

The Lucases rented a box at the opera, and if it was not let at the library by six o'clock, and if other engagements permitted, word was sent round to Mrs. Staines, as a matter of course, and she was taken to the opera. She began almost to live at the Lucas's, and to be oftener fatigued than moped.

The usual order of things was inverted; the maiden lady educated the matron; for Miss Lucas knew all about everybody in the Park, honourable or dishonourable; all the scandals, and all the flirtations; and whatever she knew, she related point-blanc. Being as inquisitive as voluble, she soon learned how Mrs. Staines and her husband were situated. She took upon her to advise her in many things, and especially impressed upon her that Dr. Staines must keep a carriage, if he wanted to get on in medicine. This piece of advice accorded so well with Rosa's wishes, that she urged it on her husband again and again.

He objected that no money was coming in, and therefore it would be insane to add to their expenses. Rosa persisted, and at last worried Staines with her importunity. He began to give rather short answers. Then she quoted Miss Lucas against him. He treated the authority with marked contempt; and then Rosa fired up a little. Then Staines held his peace; but did not buy a carriage to visit his no patients.

So, at last, Rosa complained to Lady Cicely Treherne, and made her the judge between her husband and herself.

Lady Cicely drawled out a prompt but polite refusal to play that part. All that could be elicited from her, and that with difficulty, was, "Why quall with your husband about a cawwige; he is your best fwiend."

'Ah, that he is,' said Rosa; 'but Miss Lucas is a good friend, and she knows the world. We don't; neither Christopher nor I.'

So she continued to nag at her husband about it, and to say that he was throwing his only chance away.

Galled as he was by neglect, this was irritating, and, at last, he could not help telling her she was unreasonable. 'You live a gay life, and I a sad one. I consent to this, and let you go about with these Lucas's, because you were so dull; but you should not consult them in our private affairs. Their interference is indelicate and improper. I will not set up a carriage till I have patients to visit. I am sick of seeing our capital dwindle, and no income created. I will never set up a carriage till I have taken a hundred-guinea fee.'

'Oh! Then we shall go splashing through the mud all our days.'

'Or ride in a cab,' said Christopher, with a quiet doggedness that left no hope of his yielding.

One afternoon Miss Lucas called for Mrs. Staines to drive in the Park, but did not come upstairs; it was an engagement, and she knew Mrs. Staines would be ready, or nearly. Mrs. Staines, not to keep her waiting, came down rather hastily, and, in the very

passage, whipped out of her pocket a little glass, and a little powder puff, and puffed her face all over in a trice. She was then going out; but her husband called her into the study. 'Rosa, my dear,' said he, 'you were going out with a dirty face.'

'Oh!' cried she, 'give me a glass.'

'There is no need of that. All you want is a basin and some nice rain-water. I keep a little reservoir of it.'

He then handed her the same with great politeness. She looked in his eye, and saw he was not to be trifled with. She complied like a lamb, and the heavenly colour and velvet gloss that resulted were admirable.

He kissed her, and said, 'Ah! now you are my Rosa again. Oblige me by handing over that powder-puff to me.' She looked vexed, but complied. 'When you come back, I will tell you why.'

'You are a pest,' said Mrs. Staines, and so joined her friend, rosy with rain-water and a rub.

'Dear me, how handsome you look to-day,' was Miss Lucas's first remark.

Rosa never dreamed that rain-water and rub could be the cause of her looking so well.

'It is my tiresome husband,' said she. 'He objects to powder, and he has taken away my puff.'

'And you stood that?'

'Obliged to.'

'Why, you poor-spirited little creature, I should like to see a husband presume to interfere with me in those things. Here, take mine.'

Rosa hesitated a little. 'Well—no—I think not.'

Miss Lucas laughed at her, and quizzed her so on her allowing a man to interfere in such sacred things as dress and cosmetics, that she came back irritated with her

husband, and gave him a short answer or two. Then he asked what was the matter.

'You treat me like a child—taking away my very puff.'

'I treat you like a beautiful flower, that no bad gardener shall wither whilst I am here.'

'What nonsense! How could that wither me? It is only violet-powder—what they put on babies.'

'And who are the Herods that put it on babies?'

'Their own mothers, that love them ten times more than the fathers do.'

'And kill a hundred of them for one a man ever kills. Mothers!—the most wholesale homicides in the nation. We will examine your violet powder: bring it down here.'

While she was gone he sent for a breakfast-cupful of flour, and when she came back he had his scales out, and begged her to put a teaspoonful of flour into one scale and of violet powder into another. The flour kicked the beam, as Homer expresses himself.

'Put another spoonful of flour.'

The one spoonful of violet powder outweighed the two of flour.

'Now,' said Staines, 'does not that show you the presence of a mineral in your vegetable powder? I suppose they tell you it is made of white violets dried, and triturated in a diamond mill. Let us find out what metal it is. We need not go very deep into chemistry for that.' He then applied a simple test, and detected the presence of lead in large quantities. Then he lectured her: 'Invisible perspiration is a process of nature necessary to health and to life. The skin is made porous for that purpose. You can kill anybody in an hour or two by closing the pores. A certain infallible ass, called Pope Leo XII., killed a little boy in two hours, by gilding him to adorn the

pageant of his first procession as Pope. But what is death to the whole body must be injurious to a part. What madness, then, to clog the pores of so large and important a surface as the face, and check the invisible perspiration: how much more to insert lead into your system every day of your life; a cumulative poison, and one so deadly and so subtle, that the Sheffield file-cutters die in their prime, from merely hammering on a leaden anvil. And what do you gain by this suicidal habit? No plum has a sweeter bloom or more delicious texture than the skin of your young face; but this mineral filth hides that delicate texture, and substitutes a dry, uniform appearance, more like a certain kind of leprosy than health. Nature made your face the rival of peaches, roses, lilies; and you say "No; I know better than my Creator and my God; my face shall be like a dusty miller's." Go into any flour-mill, and there you shall see men with faces exactly like your friend Miss Lucas's. But, before a miller goes to his sweetheart, he always washes his face. You ladies would never get a miller down to your level in brains. It is a miller's *dirty* face our monomaniacs of women imitate, not the face a miller goes a-courting with.

'La! what a fuss about nothing!

'About nothing! Is your health nothing? Is your beauty nothing? Well, then, it will cost you nothing to promise me never to put powder on your face again.'

'Very well, I promise. Now what will you do for me?'

'Work for you—write for you—suffer for you—be self-denying for you—and even give myself the pain of disappointing you now and then—looking forward to the time when I shall be able to say "Yes" to everything you ask me. Ah!

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child, you little know what it costs me to say "No" to you.'

Rosa put her arms round him, and acquiesced. She was one of those who go with the last speaker; but, for that very reason, the eternal companionship of so flighty and flirty a girl as Miss Lucas was injurious to her.

One day Lady Cicely Treherne was sitting with Mrs. Staines, smiling languidly at her talk, and occasionally drawling out a little plain good sense, when in came Miss Lucas, with her tongue well hung, as usual, and dashed into twenty topics in ten minutes.

This young lady in her discourse was like those little oily beetles you see in small ponds, whose whole life is spent in tacking—confound them!—generally at right angles. What they are in navigation was Miss Lucas in conversation: tacked so eternally from topic to topic, that no man on earth, and not every woman, could follow her.

At the sight and sound of her Lady Cicely congealed and stiffened. Easy and unpretending with Mrs. Staines, she was all dignity, and even majesty, in the presence of this chatterbox; and the smoothness with which the transfiguration was accomplished marked that accomplished actress the high-bred woman of the world.

Rosa, better able to estimate the change of manner than Miss Lucas was, who did not know how little this Sawny was afflicted with misplaced dignity, looked wistfully and distressed at her. Lady Cicely smiled kindly in reply, rose, without seeming to hurry—catch her condescending to be rude to Charlotte Lucas—and took her departure, with a profound and most gracious curtsy to the lady who had driven her away.

Mrs. Staines saw her downstairs, and said, ruefully, 'I am afraid you do not like my friend Miss

Lucas. She is a great rattle, but so goodnatured and clever.'

Lady Cicely shook her head. 'Clevaa people don't talk so much nonsense before stangaas.'

'Oh dear!' said Rosa. 'I was in hopes you would like her.'

'Do you like her?'

'Indeed I do; but I shall not, if she drives an older friend away.'

'My dyah, I'm not easily dwiven from those I esteem. But you undastand that is not a woman for me to mispronounce my "ah's" befaw—NOR FOR YOU TO MAKE A BOSOM-FRIEND OF—ROSA STAINES.'

She said this with a sudden maternal solemnity and kindness that contrasted nobly and strangely with her yea-nay style, and Mrs. Staines remembered the words years after they were spoken.

It so happened that after this Mrs. Staines received no more visits from Lady Cicely for some time, and that vexed her. She knew her sex enough to be aware that they are very jealous, and she permitted herself to think that this high-minded Sawny was jealous of Miss Lucas.

This idea, founded on a general estimate of her sex, was dispelled by a few lines from Lady Cicely, to say her family and herself were in deep distress: her brother, Lord Aycough, lay dying from an accident.

Then Rosa was all remorse, and ran down to Staines to tell him. She found him with an open letter in his hand. It was from Dr. Barr, and on the same subject. The doctor, who had always been friendly to him, invited him to come down at once to Hallowtree Hall, in Huntingdonshire, to a consultation. There was a friendly intimation to start at once, as the patient might die any moment.

Husband and wife embraced each other in a tumult of sur-

prised thankfulness. A few necessities were thrown into a carpet-bag, and Dr. Staines was soon whirled into Huntingdonshire. Having telegraphed beforehand, he was met at the station by the earl's carriage and people, and driven to the Hall. He was received by an old, silver-haired butler, looking very sad, who conducted him to a boudoir; and then went and tapped gently at the door of the patient's room. It was opened and shut very softly, and Lady Cicely, dressed in black, and looking paler than ever, came into the room.

'Dr. Staines, I think?'

He bowed.

'Thank you for coming so promptly. Dr. Barr is gone. I fear he thinks—he thinks—Oh, Doctor Staines—no sign of life but in his poor hands, that keep moving night and day.'

Staines looked very grave at that. Lady Cicely observed it, and, faint at heart, could say no more, but led the way to the sick room.

There in a spacious chamber, lighted by a grand oriel window and two side windows, lay rank, title, wealth, and youth stricken down in a moment by a common accident. The sufferer's face was bloodless, his eyes fixed, and no signs of life but in his thumbs, and they kept working with strange regularity.

In the room were a nurse and the surgeon; the neighbouring physician, who had called in Doctor Barr, had just paid his visit, and gone away.

Lady Cicely introduced Dr. Staines and Mr. White, and then Dr. Staines stood and fixed his eyes on the patient in profound silence.

Lady Cicely scanned his countenance searchingly, and was struck with the extraordinary power and

intensity it assumed in examining the patient; but the result was not encouraging. Dr. Staines looked grave and gloomy.

At last, without removing his eye from the recumbent figure, he said quietly to Mr. White, 'Thrown from his horse, sir.'

'Horse fell on him, Dr. Staines.'

'Any visible injuries?'

'Yes. Severe contusions, and a rib broken and pressed upon the lungs. I replaced and set it. Will you see?'

'If you please.'

He examined and felt the patient, and said it had been ably done.

Then he was silent and searching.

At last he spoke again. 'The motion of the thumbs corresponds exactly with his pulse.'

'Is that so, sir?'

'It is. The case is without a parallel. How long has he been so?'

'Nearly a week.'

'Impossible!'

'It is so, sir.'

Lady Cicely confirmed this.

'All the better,' said Dr. Staines, upon reflection. 'Well, sir,' said he, 'the visible injuries having been ably relieved, I shall look another way for the cause.' Then, after another pause, 'I must have his head shaved.'

Lady Cicely demurred a little to this; but Dr. Staines stood firm, and his lordship's valet undertook the job.

Staines directed him where to begin; and when he had made a circular tonsure on the top of the head, had it sponged with tepid water.

'I thought so,' said he. 'Here is the mischief,' and he pointed to a very slight indentation on the left side of the pia mater. 'Observe,' said he, 'there is no corresponding indentation on the

other side. Underneath this trifling depression a minute piece of bone is doubtless pressing on the most sensitive part of the brain. He must be trephined.'

Mr. White's eyes sparkled.

'You are a hospital surgeon, sir?'

'Yes, Dr. Staines. I have no fear of the operation.'

'Then I hand the patient over to you. The case at present is entirely surgical.'

White was driven home, and soon returned with the requisite instruments. The operation was neatly performed, and then Lady Cicely was called in. She came trembling; her brother's fingers were still working, but not so regularly.

'That is only *habit*,' said Staines; 'it will soon leave off, now the cause is gone.'

And, truly enough, in about five minutes the fingers became quiet. The eyes became human next; and within half an hour after the operation the Earl gave a little sigh.

Lady Cicely clasped her hands, and uttered a little cry of delight.

'This will not do,' said Staines.

'I shall have you screaming when he speaks.'

'Oh, Doctor Staines, will he ever speak?'

'I think so; and very soon. So be on your guard.'

This strange scene reached its climax soon after by the Earl saying, quietly,

'Are her knees broke, Tom?'

Lady Cicely uttered a little scream, but instantly suppressed it.

'No, my Lord,' said Staines, smartly; 'only rubbed a bit. You can go to sleep, my Lord. I'll take care of the mare.'

'All right,' said his lordship; and composed himself to slumber.

Doctor Staines, at the earnest

request of Lady Cicely, stayed all night; and in course of the day advised her how to nurse the patient, since both physician and surgeon had done with him.

He said the patient's brain might be irritable for some days, and no women in silk dresses, or crinoline, or creaking shoes, must enter the room. He told her the nurse was evidently a clumsy woman, and would be letting things fall. She had better get some old soldier used to nursing. 'And don't whisper in the room,' said he; 'nothing irritates them worse; and don't let anybody play a piano within hearing; but in a day or two you may try him with slow and continuous music on the flute or violin if you like. Don't touch his bed suddenly; don't sit on it or lean on it. Dole sunlight into his room by degrees; and when he can bear it, drench him with it. Never mind what the old school tell you. About these things they know a good deal less than nothing.'

Lady Cicely received all this like an oracle.

The cure was telegraphed to Dr. Barr, and he was requested to settle the fee. He was not the man to undersell the profession, and was jealous of nobody, having a large practice, and a very wealthy wife. So he telegraphed back—'Fifty guineas, and a guinea a mile from London.'

So, as Christopher Staines sat at an early breakfast, with the carriage waiting to take him to the train, two notes were brought him on a salver.

They were both directed by Lady Cicely Treherne. One of them contained a few kind and feeling words of gratitude and esteem; the other, a cheque, drawn by the Earl's steward, for one hundred and thirty guineas.

He bowled up to London, and told it all to Rosa. She sparkled with pride, affection, and joy.

'Now, who says you are not a genius?' she cried. 'A hundred and thirty guineas for one fee! Now, if you love your wife as she loves you—you will set up a brougham.'

(To be continued.)



FRENCH NOVELISTS.

XX.—Victor Hugo.

THERE are few regions of Europe into which Victor Hugo's 'magnificent scream' has not penetrated. Poet, politician, philosopher, novelist—he is far above mediocrity in each vocation, and is more than eminent, is illustrious, in more than one. Though the excitement of recent events, acting upon a man who has lived long the life of a retired student, looking out on a waste of sea, may have carried his political oratory into unpractical frothiness and oceanic splutter, yet we are not justified in following the fashion set by many of the newspapers during the war, of ridiculing him as a political imbecile. We cannot despise the man who in the days of the old republic, in 1851, foresaw the imminence of the empire—that 'immense intrigue,' and had yet the courage to denounce it in the Chamber in such mordant language as this: 'Quoi! après Auguste, Augustule! Quoi! parce que nous avons eu Napoléon-le-grand, il faut que nous ayons Napoléon-le-petit!'

Victor Hugo does not spring from high-born ancestry, but the nineteenth century appears to have been favourable to the stock; for each member of the family has become more or less distinguished during that period. Victor Hugo's father came of a bourgeois family, living at Nancy. Hugo père was born in 1774, and enlisted, at the age of fourteen, in an infantry regiment, just before the time of the revolution. Military promotion was rapid in those days, and passing from grade to grade, being only a sub-lieutenant in 1791, he became a general in

1809. Whilst a captain, between 1797 and 1799, he had terrible functions to fulfil. Having been nominated reporter of a council of war, his business was to carry out the fatal suits against the run-aways, at a time when it was sufficient to have their identity established for them to be ordered away to death. During this period Victor Hugo's two elder brothers were born. The father was probably a man of vigorous intellect, for the three sons have all earned distinction. The elder, Abel Hugo, began life as a page of Joseph Buonaparte, when the latter was king of Spain. He was a notable child for precocity, having entrusted to him, whilst very young indeed, most delicate missions. Become a little older, he saved his own life and the lives of others on several occasions by the exercise of marvellous ingenuity. At fourteen he was with the army, betaking himself, in the most difficult straits or cruel privations, to three or four volumes of French and Spanish poetry which he carried with him. With these he returned to Paris in 1813, and made use of his studies of foreign literature for lectures, which had a marked effect, and prepared the way for the new Romantic School, of which his brother Victor was afterwards the chief. He wrote many valuable works, but only in prose. To his brother he abandoned the poetical domain. He died in 1855, with the first sheets of a great history of the Crimean war just published. The second brother was a kind of seer, with an unquiet, exalted imagination. He wrote some fine energetic lyrics

and dramatic legends, met with an unfortunate love-passion, and went crazy—incurably so.

Victor Marie Hugo was born at Besançon in February 1802; and, as an infant, travelled over Europe, his father being stationed successively in Elba, at Geneva, at Paris, in Italy. Whilst governor of the province of Avelino, the latter destroyed the band of the heroic brigand, Fra Diavolo.

We have some pretty pictures of Hugo's early life. As a boy he resided with his mother in an ancient abbey. She was a lady of some culture and taste, a Vendean and royalist, and the first muse of her son. Under her inspiration the young Victor composed charming juvenile verses, chiefly echoes of her royalism, several of which obtained academical prizes. One of his earlier attempts was refused the prize, because the judges imagined that the candidate was hoaxing them in giving his age as fourteen. As the boy grew older he composed a coronation ode for Charles X., which he was called upon to present to the king. That monarch handed the verses to Chateaubriand for an opinion on their merits, and received the enthusiastic comment upon them from his poetic councillor:—'Sire, c'est un enfant sublime!'

Hugo's mother died when he was nineteen, and at twenty he married a girl even younger than himself, Mdlle. Adèle Foucher. At this date the youth had composed one or two of the books whose names are now known to the world. One of these, 'Han d'Islande,' a sort of etherialized 'Blue Beard,' succeeded so well as to reach a second edition, and bring something of material comfort to the little cottage that lay so cosily hidden amongst trees, but had held previously more hope than realization, more en-

thusiasm than bank notes. The Catholic usage is to make a special confession before marriage. Victor Hugo's youth, it is said, had been so unsullied that the only penance required of him was a chat with Lamennais, his confessor. These chats with Lamennais led, however, to more than a recital of boyish peccadilloes; they inaugurated a spiritual direction on the part of the democratic priest, which soon sowed some deeper thoughts than his mother's in the midst of the young man's untested and superficial royalism.

Chateaubriand followed up his first admiration of Victor Hugo by asking him to visit him, and according him a dignified and gracious patronage. It would make an entertaining picture could we but have seen the high-minded and pompous old author send his secretary for an old manuscript of verses, and read aloud to his young protégé his pet portions of a ponderous tragedy; the young man feeling highly favoured all the while, and doing his utmost to think the whole very fine, and whenever he found a line or a passage that he could conscientiously admire, piling his most assiduous praises upon that.

Like most writers who rise to greatness, Victor Hugo gave birth in his early days to a number of writings, the titles of which never appear in the list of his works, even when they are recounted by his most admiring friends. Such juvenile obscurities are 'Roland et la Chevalerie,' a book of poems; 'Irtamène,' a tragedy, the last line of which, by-the-by, shows strong traces of Hugo's royalist bringing up—

'Quand on hait les tyrans, on doit aimer les rois.'

Several other poems and tragedies were evolved from this precocious boy, but all are unknown until we

arrive at 'Hau d'Islande,' composed when he was nineteen. This, say his friends, was the first cry of revolt of the young eagle.

The young eagle lived for some years in his cottage with his wife, as quietly as paired birds usually live, and happily. An amusing little story is told, which may illustrate his life at this period. The poet, his wife, and little boys, used to take walks in the fields about their cottage. One evening they ascended a knoll, whereon was a windmill swaying its monstrous arms. Victor Hugo offered to bet that he would lay hold of one of them, and, hanging on to it, would make a revolution in the air. Madame screamed, and so her husband renounced his projected aerial voyage. But, to prove that the thing was possible, he threw his wife's handkerchief upon a mounting wing, and ran round to the other side of the mill to catch it coming down. All at once, in the mill itself, there opened a skylight; a mocking face appeared, it was followed by an outstretched hand; and Madame's cambric and lace, ere her husband could get round, had become the prey of the miller, who closed his window again with a burst of laughter. Some stout country girl that evening doubtless had a pretty present from her floury lover.

Friends soon began to surround Victor Hugo in his cottage home. He began to think, and to be looked upon by those that surrounded him, as a master. True evidences of his genius rapidly manifested themselves. He began to offend critics of taste, and to set on edge the teeth of decorous keepers of academic canons. He commenced his series of romantic dramas, wherein some high spirit, some young enthusiasm, some modern vitality, were permitted to

abide in opposition to the heavy classical unrealities of the orthodox writers. These gentry shrugged their shoulders at first, and the press amused itself with the new school; but as the power and influence of these iconoclastic heretics began to manifest itself in growing enthusiasms, a battle between the two parties began in earnest.

Hugo must have worked hard in those days; he produced simultaneously, lyrics, dramas, and romances. In 1832, Sainte-Beuve was reviewing his novels as a whole, and pronounced 'Notre Dame,' the last written, to be the first of a series of truly great romances, which the author was destined to continue in the future. With 'Notre Dame' commences, doubtless, the acquaintance of the average English reader with Victor Hugo. This work was written without interruption, its author availing himself of Balzac's plan of composing. He shut himself up from convivial friends, and lived in his work. He locked up his dress-clothes, and, clothed in a 'bear-skin'—we have seen an English novelist at work wrapped up in a huge blanket—dreamed and wrote. It is even said that he bought a bottle of ink to begin with, which was drained dry with the last chapter; and that hence arose the well-known expression for a book—'*Ce qu'il y a dans une bouteille d'encre;*' which saying Hugo afterwards made over to one of his friends, who wished to utilize it as the title of a series of works. Professor de Morgan could not bear a fire near him when he had any abstruse intellectual operation before him; but was wont then to sit wrapped up in an overcoat. Hugo, on the contrary, likes a big fire and an open window when he works.

Victor Hugo was driven out of his rural cottage. Paris, like London, kept running into its suburbs with more and more bricks and mortar. Trees were cut down, and the fields long associated with pleasant walks began to grow crops of scaffolding poles. For a time Hugo lived in a house in the Champs Elysées, whence he migrated, in 1830, to the Place Royale, to a splendid old mansion, where he lived for fifteen years. His novel of 'Notre Dame,' says some critic, saved mediæval art in France, and gave archaeology a lyrical impulse. His Parisian abode seems to have been a mediæval and archæologic embodiment. Here Hugo reigned as king, with a very distinguished court.

In 1848, Hugo entered the political arena and was elected a representative, of course on the revolutionary side; for his ideas had been gradually developing from the time that his mother's influence was removed and he entered into the wide world.

In 1851, after the Coup d'État, Hugo went into exile, proceeding first to Brussels and thence to England. He has no great affection for London. He came thither in December 1851—an unpleasant month for an exile's tour—but found the fogs too much for him. 'God, who has taken our country from us, should not quite withdraw the sun as well,' said he.

After England he proceeded to Jersey, where in

'A spare white house of unaccustomed form,

On barren clifflands scarred by wrathful storm,'

he lived in tranquillity for several years. Some small difficulty arising in connection with the government and another refugee, a friend of his, he exchanged Jersey for Guernsey in 1855. Since that

date he has had his home in that charming island, making occasional visits to Brussels. On Napoleon's fall he returned to Paris, and continued there during the siege, but he appears now to have gone back for good to his exile-home, though few weeks pass without some words of his, of letter or message, being published in Paris.

Whatever political weaknesses he may be guilty of, he deserves the credit of writing novels steadily. In 1861 he was writing, from a village near Waterloo, to Auguste Vacquerie, a great friend of his:—

'Dear Auguste, this morning, 30th of June, at half past eight, with a fine sun in my windows, I have finished 'Les Misérables.' Since that work, have appeared 'Les Travailleurs de la Mer' and 'L'homme qui rit,' both of which, probably, are nearly as well known in England as in France. Ten years ago, one of his reviewers referred to a work of his as brought out "after forty-three years of action, at the theatre, the tribune, the press; after the production of ten volumes of poems, three of dramas, six of romantic or philosophical works, and eleven years of exile." Hugo is now three score and ten, but hale enough to take two hundred sea-baths a year, which must be nearly one a day during the time he is at home.

In practical matters Hugo seems always to have had a quiet power of getting his own way. When quite a young man, as artistic leader of a new and heretical clique, he had much to fight against from the powers that be. His plays being, as they were, 'an energetic revelation of what height of daring one may attain to on the boards,' not seldom came under official interdict. And,

what was even worse, actors revolted against the expressions assigned to them—the language was too forcible. Such verbal audacities as this—

‘Horrible compagne, dont le menton fleurit et dont le nez trognonne,’

shocked the gallery as much as they disturbed the mincing mouths of the actors in uttering them. There was one actress between whom and the author there was a regular trial of strength. It was Mdlle. Mars, who affected culture and critical faculty. At the reading of ‘Hernani’ she sat in dignified hauteur, and crunched burnt almond. As the young dramatist read the words—

‘Mei, je suis fille noble et de ce sang jalouse,
Trop pour la concubine et trop peu pour l’épouse,’

a voice interrupted him saying: ‘Favorite.’ The author raised his head and looked towards Mdlle. Mars. She had her eyes fixed on the ceiling, and her fingers in her comfit-box. He thought there was some mistake, and recommenced. Again there was the same interruption. ‘Is it you,’ at length he asked, ‘who do me the honour to interrupt me?’ She answered in the affirmative. ‘You think, then, that the word *favorite* would advantageously replace that of *concubine*?’ ‘I am sure of it. We have never said “concubine” at the theatre.’ ‘Then it shall be said for the first time, madame,’ answered Hugo; ‘one word gives force to my thought—the other would weaken it.’ She tried to impress upon the obstinate author that the public were certain to hiss, but he persisted in his design. At the very last moment, when the piece was being brought out publicly, she went to her opponent

just before it was her turn to go on the stage, and asked, impudently, if he still refused to expunge the offending word. He told her that the public would be quite within its right if it were to hiss, but that she was not in her right in interrupting proceedings. So the matter dropped, but this was not the last pestering he had to undergo at the hands of the fashionable actress. We have reproduced the story, as it serves as a representative one, and marks the opposition between the old and new school; the one taking refuge in conventionality, the other striking out boldly, and calling a spade a spade.

One act of unusual audacity we ought to place to the credit of Victor Hugo. He firmly refused a large pension offered him in connection with an interdict which had been placed upon one of his dramas.

Victor Hugo is an example of the vast power of the novel as a literary instrument. Where one person in England has read his poems or followed his speeches, a hundred know something of his novels. This is by no means because he writes better novels as novels than poems as poems; but because of the superior penetrating power of the great modern literary engine, the novel. Though we may not be able to say with M. Pelletan, as he spoke when proposing Hugo as a toast at a banquet, that ‘the romance can correct the false positivism of the statesman, by opposing to the diplomacy of politics the eternal verity of the human heart;’ yet there is no doubt that a large and broad undercurrent of real power and influence attends the circulation of a high-class novel strongly impregnated with ideas. The novel may not be in England the enemy of the statesman, but it is

the terrible rival of the drama and the sermon.

It has been said of Hugo that his fictions afford in literature the species of interest resulting in vulgar life from the spectacle of an execution. There is a certain truth in this accusation; there is, in several of his novels, an intense and straining excitement which arises from the contemplation of abnormal and unusual passions. In *'Notre Dame,'* for instance, we have the infatuation of two men for one woman, running through the story. There is nothing very unusual in the idea, taken simply as we have put it, but when one of love's madmen is a celibate priest, and the other a hideous hunchback, and the girl a gipsy dancing-girl, and the loves not open and healthy, but of the morbid, gloating kind, we feel that there is a fascination about the book which if not actually demoniacal in its nature, is yet such as we find it almost a necessity to exorcise. In *'By Order of the King,'* a similar instance of such demoralised passion is to be found in the bath-chamber scene, between the Duchess and the 'grinning man.'

But Hugo's intensities of style are more often noble than ignoble.

The sort of people, too, that make so terrific a romance, for instance, as *'Le Dernier Jour d'un Condamné,'* not only necessary but good, are the members of that very large class, the fat-witted, who have never had their feelings awakened to the pitch of sympathy with anything outside themselves. Such people are well described as those who 'would condemn a fellow creature to death with little deliberation, rather than go longer than usual without their dinner, but would be mightily shocked, and talk of harrowing their feelings, should any one seek to force

upon them a consideration of the real amount of suffering which they had inflicted, or were about to inflict.' Some have called such works of Victor Hugo, 'a long nightmare;' but the author seems always to have before his vision the heavy bourgeois temperament, that nothing short of a horrible night-equine impression can sting into anything like feeling. However, Hugo was the leader of the Romantic School, and his works, where he strives the most, 'se complaire avec une sorte de sensualité à faire savourer au lecteur toutes les angoisses de la douleur morale ou physique,' do but mark the intensity of the reaction against the smooth-lacquered nothingnesses of the old classical literary regime, and the deadness of the feelings which he set himself to teach to move.

In spite of the tendency to vagueness and formlessness in the emotions he depicts, and the 'piling up of agony' which detracts from the effect of his books upon the practical, commonplace reader, by its appearance of being overstrained, there is a strange fascination in Hugo's writings. They are vertiginous, and produce a weird cerebral excitement. Mr. Wilkie Collins's books produce something of the same sensation, and are apt to carry away the reader in an unquiet whirl; but Hugo's intensities are grander and more lasting in their influence. The latter half of the *'Toilers of the Sea'* may afford an example of what we mean.

Hugo has not been the best possible teacher for the French nation; his practicable political ideas have too often excited them in the path of their distinctive passions, shallow pride, and infatuation for what they denominate glory. His purer and higher thoughts have been too pure and

high, too spiritually ideal for the average French mind, which vibrates between dense materialism with its scoffing scepticism, and sensuous religion with its weak devoteism. But when he draws a political picture for Frenchmen, and describes the stones on the left bank of a particular river as crying out, 'Il faut que la France reprenne le Rhin,' they were, unfortunately, able to comprehend his meaning only too well. If they had remembered also what he said in 1839, 'Prussia is on the advance,' perhaps they might have gained good as well as evil from his counsels.

Victor Hugo has two natures. In one, the lower nature, he has all a Frenchman's weaknesses, his unsteadiness of purpose, his childish excitability, his mad gaieties, his depressions, his demoralisation. But above this lower nature he has a life more serene and pure, a life of poetry and spirituality, of deep insights and celestial intuitions, a life of true moral passion and earnestness. He may not be angelic as a man, but an angelic shoot is somehow grafted in him. In his French moods he is often unreasonable and hysterical; when he is sufficiently free from excitement to be cosmopolitan, his spirit is that of a noble and high humanitarianism.

Perhaps exile has been good for Hugo in making him less Parisian and more cosmopolitan. 'Exile,' says one writing of him, 'voyage without goal, days without hours, space without air!' Another friend of his was more practically suggestive, if less poetical, in his observations on this topic. It was at a banquet given in Hugo's honour at Brussels, in 1862, that one of his countrymen, adverting to his presence, pointed out that, although his hair was white, his forehead and eye had a calm and

serenity which neither ten years of exile nor manifold incentives to despair and wrath had been able to disturb. On this was naively commented: 'His rock of Guernsey and the sea which environs it, seem to be barriers that our quarrels, our jealousies, our rancours and our feeblenesses are unable to overcome.'

Hugo has a grand idea of doing away with the statesman or middle-man, and bringing the thinker into direct communication with the people much more fully than at present. The idea is a fine one, but it is to be feared that men's bosoms, at all events in France, are too easily inflammable and too little self-regulative for it to be developed at present in politics with safety.

Of one thing Hugo cannot complain, that he has been without enthusiastic admirers. With regard to the chapter in 'Les Misérables,' where Jean Valjean is struggling with himself respecting his duty of descending from his position as a man of wealth and respectability to his old criminal name and standing, in order to save the unfortunate who had been mistaken for him; one of these admirers says that the strife is more grand, terrible, and imposing than Waterloo: 'In the one there are 200,000 men, in the other there is humanity.'

Financially, too, Victor Hugo must have been well appreciated, for his great works have a prodigious circulation. 'Les Misérables,' it is said, appeared the same day at Paris, Brussels, Leipsic, London, Milan, Madrid, Rotterdam, Warsaw, Pesth, Rio de Janeiro. There were three editions in French, one at Paris of fifteen thousand copies, one at Brussels of twelve thousand, and a third at Leipsic of three thousand copies. There were also

nine or ten translations, viz., into English, German, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, Polish, Hungarian, Portuguese. In Spanish there were two versions, one of which was published in Paris with one thousand six hundred and fifty copies, the other in Madrid with five thousand. 'Han d'Islande' was sold for three hundred francs; four hundred thousand, it is said, were bid for 'Les Misérables.'

Large sums, it is plain, are made by Hugo for his writings; but, on the other hand, he spends freely. One of the best evidences that the humanitarian passion, which is the highest element of his character, is genuine and true in him, is that he loses no opportunity of carrying his principles into practice. Whether it be a political cause that he is favouring, or the poor of Guernsey that he is succouring, he gives with no niggard hand. In his humanitarianism he is always consistent, always the same, whether in his writings or his life. He is always pleading eloquently in favour of the disinherited of this world, always looking out for the weak and uncared for, with tender solicitude. It is at the proud and the strong alone that he incessantly strikes, deeming received opinions not necessarily infallible, success not necessarily great, and those in high places not necessarily noble. But his spirit of defiance of the 'principalities and powers' is one of chivalry, not of jealousy. The motto graven upon the walls of his home is 'Gloria victis, vae nemini,' which is good Christianity as opposed to the 'Vae victis' of old.

Hugo's poems, when they are not 'Chatiments,' are often rather ordinary and monotonous, especially among his earlier ballads and odes. But there are exceptions enough among all to prove

him a genius. There are, even amongst the smallest, absolute gems of lyrical art; and there are many exquisite blendings of pathos and poetic elegance, marked with a stamp that is Hugo's alone. Let us take for example a poem referring to the fine old journalist, M. Bertin, who, when Louis Philippe asked to see him, replied with genuine politeness and most praiseworthy candour, 'The king is very well off at Versailles, and I am very well off at Les Roches; were he to come here, we might both feel uncomfortable.' This M. Bertin lived in a pretty country villa, where he kept open house always. He oppressed his visitors by no conventionalities, but left all free to amuse themselves as seemed best to each, reserving the same privilege of liberty for himself. Being an old man, he had one day fallen asleep whilst reading in the garden. Thus Victor Hugo must have seen him, and so have gained the suggestion which is so exquisitely rendered as follows:—

'Et du fond de leur nid, sous l'orme et
sous l'érable
Les oiseaux admiraient sa tête vénérable,
Et, gais chanteurs tremblants,
Ils guettaient, s'approchaient et sou-
haitaient dans l'ombre,
D'avoir, pour augmenter la douceur
du nid sombre,
Un de ses cheveux blancs.

A fit pair to this, in its peculiar elegance, would be the poem where a maiden is promised 'a green robe in April' and it comes to her in the springing of green buds over her grave.

To make a reputation in poetry, Hugo need have done no more than the 'Légende des Siècles,' which is his greatest and most sustained poetical work.

Looking upon Hugo from the points of view of politics, philosophy, poetry and romance, we

were almost forgetting that he has another faculty still. There is a book published as the work of Victor Hugo, in which, as says its editor, the late Théophile Gautier, there is neither chapter, nor ode, nor prose, nor verse; and yet it is always the great poet who holds the pen. The work consists, in fact, of a series of weird drawings, 'vague profiles of souvenirs, visions seen across a fog, chimeras of fantasy, and fortuitous caprices of a careless hand.' They would be done with a little ink or a little coffee on an old envelope, or the first scrap of paper that came. His friends would seize upon them so soon as done, and a few of them, having been collected, form the volume we are speaking of. As might be expected, these drawings are full of a mysterious ideality. They love cloud more than precision, and express feeling rather than form. Some of them out-Doré Doré for gloom and grand ghastliness. Some seem to give forth a positively frightful melancholy, while others breathe a soft gentleness;—cool gleams of morning are showing on the trees, river, and church spire of a little village. 'A souvenir of a fog' is wonderfully suggestive, and over a drawing entitled 'Amica silentia' seems to brood a dark lowering atmosphere of elf-land. 'One of my castles in Spain' gives us an old Moorish building of strange grotesqueness. M. Hugo is particularly fond of mottoes. Another drawing bears one for its title, 'Homo lapides, nubes deus;' in this we have lofty battlements and towers pushed proudly up into a sombre sky, across which is a wild whirl of cloud. An unwearied walker is M. Hugo, his friend tells us; 'Pensive and mysterious rover, always accompanied by the muse, he loves to surprise solitude in the abandon

of its secret attitudes, to come close to nature during hours when, expecting no one, she remains *en déshabillé*, and does not compose her features. He wanders across the meadows when, under the crimsons of evening, the files of the poplars take strange profiles, and resemble processions of phantoms; and in the morning, when the shudder of dawn makes quiver the old convulsive elm by the side of a road bathed in shadow, a passing dreamer has remarked this black tremulousness on the livid whiteness of the aurora, and you will find it in a strophe or a drawing. The poet possesses that visionary eye of which he speaks with respect to Albert Dürer; he sees things by their bizarre angle, and the life hidden under the forms reveals itself to him in its mysterious activity.'

M. Hugo would have declined to allow his little drawings to be published, but it came to his mind that the profits of their sale might contribute to form the 'civil list' of his little indigent children. We have most of us heard of his kindness to the poor of Guernsey. In this volume of designs is printed M. Hugo's letter to the publisher, M. Castel, which will give us a graphic picture of his system of charity. 'Every week, poor mothers do me the honour of bringing their children to dine with me. I had eight at first, then fifteen, now' (this was in '62) 'I have twenty-two. These children dine together. They are all mixed, Catholics, Protestants, English, French, Irish, without distinction of creed or nation. I invite them to joy and to laughter, and I say to them: Be free. We begin and terminate the repast by a form of thanks to God, simple and outside of all religious formulas that might entangle the conscience. My wife, my daughter, my sister-in-law, my sons, my ser-

vants and I, we wait upon them. They eat meat and drink wine, two great necessities for childhood. After which they play, then go to school. Catholic priests, Protestant ministers, mingled with free-thinkers and proscribed democrats, come often to see this humble supper, and it does not seem to me that any one goes away dissatisfied. . . . This is not alms, it is fraternity. This penetration of indigent families into ours does good to us as well as to them. . . . We learn to be of use to them, and they learn to bear goodwill to us.'

Victor Hugo has made a wonderful show-place of his Guernsey house. It is a sort of Wardour Street repository, drawn from the palaces of France. When we visited it in 1868 and 1871, we saw a table that had been the property of Charles the Second; part of a state bedstead of Francis the First; a service of crockery presented by Charles the Tenth. There were also bed-room tapestries from Fontainebleau, as well as embroidery from the needle of La Pompadour. Perhaps now, 1872, Victor Hugo may have added to his poetical curiosity shop a bit of furniture from the Tuileries, as a memento of his old enemy 'Napoléon le petit.' What changes and chances these two men have seen! In June 1848, Victor Hugo, Louis Napoleon, and M. Thiers were all being voted for together in the Paris elections. Paris has coquetted with the first, has played see-saw with the second, and is now under the heel of the last, and in 1848 the least favoured, of the three.

What with antique oak carvings, tapestried walls, Dutch-tiled fire-places, statues, mirrors, Chinese porcelain figures, and stray curiosities of all kinds, Victor Hugo's house bears a very unconventional aspect. We can quite understand the feeling of the aristocratic 'Six-

ties' and 'Forties' of Guernsey, in their well-upholstered mansions, looking upon the great man in their midst with some disdain, and as too eccentric to visit with. The great curiosity of all in Hugo's house is the number of maxims and mottoes one meets with everywhere. Carved on oak, embroidered on velvet, embossed on leather, they swarm like Balzac's creditors. They creep out from everywhere: from behind the stove, from out of the chest of drawers; they scale the windows, they attack the doors. These mottoes represent different sides of Victor Hugo's life and thoughts. On a great pinnacled chimney-piece we find a chronological list of earth's benefactors, thus: 'Moïse, Socrate, Christ, Colomb, Luther, Washington;' and Victor Hugo's selection of the greatest of the poets, viz., 'Job, Isaïe, Homère, Eschyle, Lucrèce, Dante, Shakespeare, Molière.' In another place we find an epigram upon a timepiece, relating to the hours:—

'Toutes laissent leur trace au corps
comme à l'esprit,
Toutes blessent, hélas!—la dernière
guérit.'

Some of the inscriptions have a religious suggestiveness, as where, under a death's head, we find the words, 'Nox, Mors, Lux.' Round one room, on the cornice, runs the following, in carved oak. It is taken from the 'Chansons des rues et des bois':—

'Le peuple est petit, mais il sera grand,
Dans tes bras sacrés, O mère féconde!
O liberté sainte, au pas conquérant,
Tu portes l'enfant qui porte le monde.'

This is more political in its tendencies. Perhaps the article that strikes a stranger most curiously is a huge wooden chair conspicuously placed by the table in one of the rooms, and with a chain drawn and fixed across its arms.

This is known as 'The chair of the ancestors;' and on it are inscribed the words, 'Les absents sont là.' On the arms of the chair are the names of some departed members of the Hugo family. The great writer's sanctum is at the very top of the house, a sort of attic room walled with glass on two sides, and from which may be seen the finest view in Guernsey; as at this height one seems to have the blue sea immediately below and around. Here, in a corner of the room, is a small deal writing-table, and here, or just above on the parapet, M. Hugo, or his great felt hat, may be discerned very early in the morning by the passer-by.

We translate a fragment from a French parody of 'L'Homme qui rit,' which will do as a foil to the description of Hugo's house. 'Ursus,' it will be observed, shares his author's passion for mural inscriptions:—

'The cabin of Ursus was simply furnished. Besides a pitcher which served him for pillow, the furniture was composed only of two leaves of paper pasted upon the wainscot, and upon which were traced with the hand two inscriptions that we could detail in sixteen pages, but that we shall translate in five lines, our work not being bound to be bought for 300,000 francs by the publisher Lacroix. Here is the sense of the inscriptions: The barons, peers, viscounts, and marquises of England, they are *canaille*! as regards the dukes, princes, judges, and lords, it is absolutely the same thing. The 172 peers reigning under James II. possessed amongst themselves alone the eleventh part

of the revenues of England. This is not fun for the thirty millions of English who are not peers.'

Hugo is one of the few among the extreme party in politics who are broad enough to entertain and daring enough to avow a love for anything antique. In his leanings towards antiquarianism he is consistent and unchangeable. M. Charles Hugo tells a story of his father, when flying, after the *Coup d'État*. It appears that he arrived in Brussels with but a small sum of money in his pocket, and found his attention arrested by a curiosity shop, where he saw an old dish of remarkable chased work. He inquired the price, and found it amounted to the sum he had in his pocket. Without thinking of what he was to make his dinner of, he bought the dish. The same faculty of taste that caused him, a new-made exile, to spend his last piece of gold upon a curious dish, doubtless impelled him to his poetic protest against the demolition of the Column last year.

Hugo has earned, and will keep, his place as a European celebrity. This is a bad time to judge him; for he lost ground with many of his admirers for his too effervescent eloquence during the war. But who could think calmly and at his best, with his country steeped in blood and disgrace, and with the boom of cannon and the horror of shells filling his beautiful city, so long worshipped as almost a goddess in the world? Victor Hugo is not quite one of the 'eternal men,' but among terrestrial stars his orb shines forth large, luminous, and many coloured.

KENINGALE COOK.



IRISH EYES.

IRISH Eyes ! Irish Eyes !

Eyes that most of all can move me—

From my book

Lift the look

Through your lashes dark and prove me,

In my worship, O how wise !

Other orbs, be content,

In your honour not dispraisal,

Most I prize

Irish Eyes,

Since were not your ebon, hazel,

Sapphire all to light them, lent ?

So no mischief, merry Eyes !

Stars of thought no jealous fancies

Can I err

To prefer

This sweet union of your glances

Sparkling, darkling Irish Eyes ?

ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES.



Charles W. Fox, Boston.

IRISH RACE.

IRISH EYES.

Irish Eyes! Irish Eyes!

Could any gaze of all can move me—

Shine my hook

And the hook

Shall all your lashes dark and prove me,

Oh my darling, O how wise!

Other girls be content,

As you, my dear, my dearest,

What I give

And the hook

Shall all your lashes dark and prove me,

Oh my darling, O how wise!

So no mischief, merry Eyes!

Stars of thought no jealous fancies

Can I err

To prefer

This sweet union of your glances

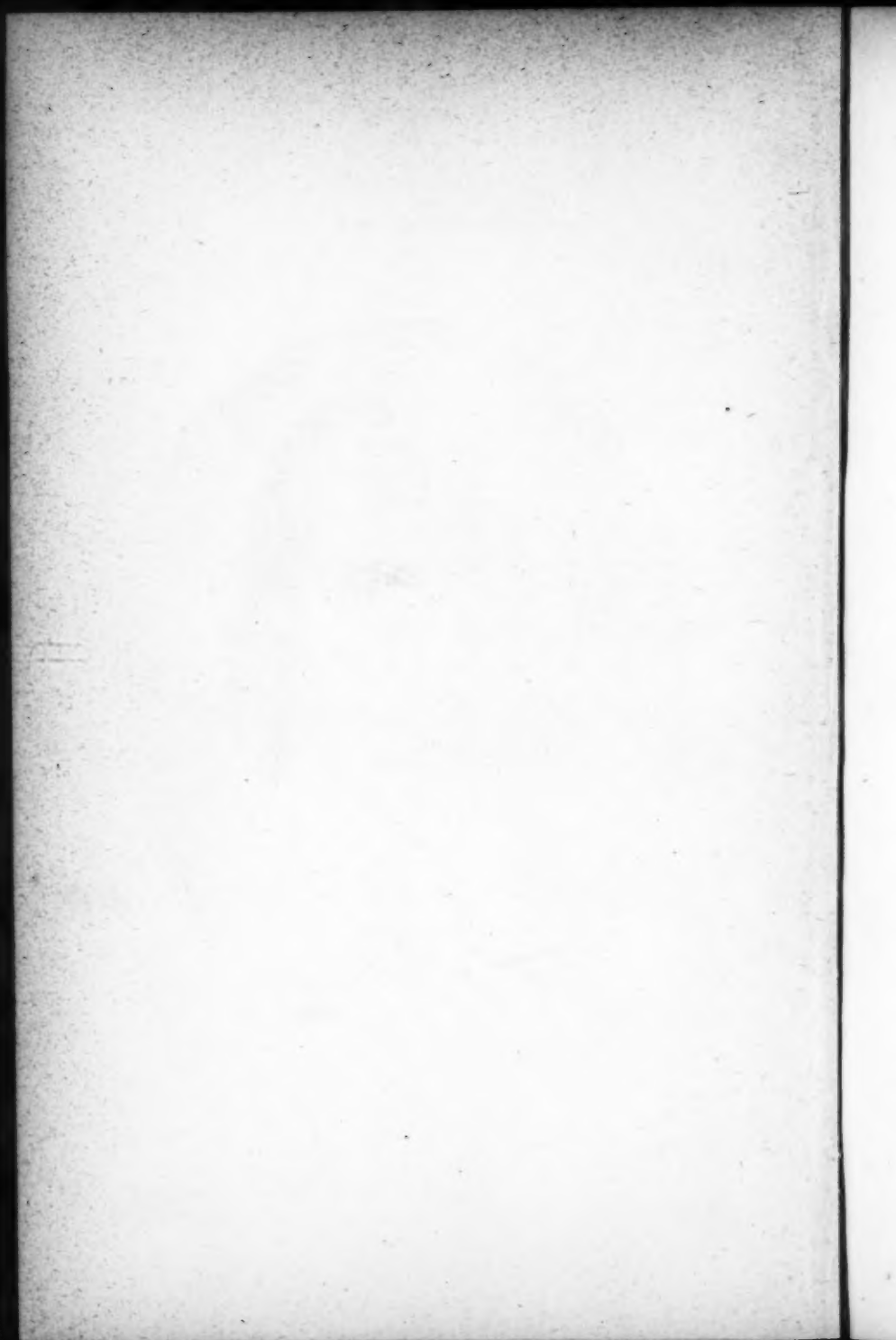
Sparkling, darkling Irish Eyes!

ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES.



Drawn by W. Rice Buckman.]

IRISH EYES.



MY ENGLISH FRIENDS.*

H. C. Chabot, Esq., M.A.

HENRY EUGENE CHABOT, M.A., understood to be an Irish gentleman, and a distinguished newspaper-writer, was, truly speaking, not more an Irishman than I am. He did not know himself to what nationality he really belonged. But since every man must belong to some place, and since he had chosen to call himself an Irishman, we will grant him this, after all, not very exorbitant claim. It is clear enough from what country his name comes, and people generally believed that he could very easily trace his connection with the celebrated dukedom of Rohan-Chabot. But he himself never cared to do so, on many grounds, of which the first was that he had not a penny in the world.

His grandfather left France at the time of the great Revolution—losing, of course, everything—and went to Italy, where he entered some profession, married a Spanish lady, and had a son, who in his turn went to Germany to study medicine, married a Hungarian lady, and got an appointment as house-surgeon to some rich landlord in Ireland. This Hungarian wife of a Franco-Spaniard, born in Italy and educated in Germany, took it into her head to make her husband a present of a son, without even waiting until the Irish shores were reached. She gave birth to my friend on board an Irish steamer, and that is how he became an Irishman.

* The first four sketches of this series appeared in the 'Globe' some eighteen months ago. They have no pretension of being anything beyond mere cartoons for a larger picture in course of preparation.—A. B.

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The mixed blood of Chabot's veins proved able to adapt itself remarkably well to all climates and surroundings. He grew up strong and healthy in the cold and damp Irish capital; and, being a Catholic, was looked upon at the University of Dublin almost as a genuine Irishman. His father and mother both died before he had finished his studies, leaving him two or three thousand pounds, which he spent almost to the last penny in travelling, after his M.A. had been secured. I became acquainted with him some eight years ago, when he spoke French like a Parisian, Italian like a citizen of Firenze, German like an Alsatian, and English with a brogue of which any Irishman could be proud. Thanks to this versatility, he was able, when all his money was spent, to secure for himself the position of foreign sub-editor on one of the papers of very large circulation, a position considered by the editor of that paper to be one of great responsibility, and therefore remunerated at the high salary of three pounds a week. Having, however, a good many foreign journals at his disposal, and being well acquainted with continental life and institutions, Chabot began in his leisure hours to write articles for some other papers, soon became known, and got, in about a year's time, an appointment as leader-writer on 'The Hour,' at a salary of eight-hundred a year. The career of the man was quite made now. The Athenæum was thrown open to him; the Quarterlies courted him, and the enterprising editors of such organs as could not secure

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his services, exerted, at all events, their best efforts to secure the presence of his person at their dinner and evening parties. When the war broke out, Chabot had no end of proposals to go abroad; for a couple of days he was exposed to something like an auction on the part of various competing newspaper-managers, and accepted the post on that journal which gave him liberty to go to the French side, and the right to 'sympathise' with the French. 'It is, after all, the least I can do for the country I ought to belong to, and for which I ought to fight now if I had not turned out an Irishman,' thought he. And so he and I went together in July 1870, to Metz, and, like all correspondents on the French side, were constantly moving in the dark, constantly threatened to be shot by those whom we wished to serve, and constantly outdone by the facilities our *confrères* enjoyed on the German side.

Some six years prior to the events described here, Chabot, then a young and jolly fellow of eight-and-twenty, was living in Paris. He had spent there already a sufficiently long time to form some connections, and to be seen wherever *tout Paris* was to be seen; and so one evening he was at the Opera on the occasion of some gala performance. The house was crammed with all sorts of celebrities of the *beau monde*, of which he knew a good many by sight and name; but the front of the box of the Duc de M——, that chief pillar of the Empire, was occupied by two ladies, both of whom struck him by their beauty, but neither of whom he could remember to have ever seen. The one, tall, slim and fair, dressed in sky-blue and snow-white, with a dazzling diadem on her head, seemed to be the fairy queen of

some unknown land of poetry and love. The other, breathing health and strength, with two large piercing eyes, dark and brilliant as jet, with nothing to adorn her head but a few diamond stars, drowned in the richest hair a woman ever possessed, attracted everybody's attention, by her charms as well as by her satin costume of yellow and cherry red, which heightened still more the beauty of her radiantly southern complexion. She seemed to be a woman intended as a companion to Hercules in those rare moments when that virtuous myth did not prefer virtue to pleasure. Chabot could not turn away his opera-glass from that box. 'Who can they be?' thought he. 'Neither can be the Duke's wife, for it's known that he never allows her to go alone into society. He would have been there. They must be some foreign deities, fresh from the railway-station. I wonder only that the papers did not say anything about them this morning.' And he resolved to have the question settled at once, were it even at the obvious risk of showing himself an ignoramus. Alfred D'Artin, of the 'Figaro,' just passing by and going to shake hands with him, was, of course, turned to account.

'Mais d'où sortez-vous, mon cher! Ce sont les épouses du Duc de M——.'

'How *les épouses*? Which is the real one?'

'Both are most real, as you see. The fair and beautiful Russian, who never makes a step without making a blunder, is the legitimate one. The dark and splendid creole, who never makes a blunder that is not a step, is just as legitimate a one, though not the Duke's.'

'Well, I know, D'Artin, how witty you always are. But you must know, too—and you have

made me feel it already—how ignorant I am. Now enlighten me, please. Who are these ladies?—or, at least, who is the creole?

'Parbleu! but it's the Comtesse de Pellet. With the Duke she takes the place of the Duchess; with the Duchess she takes the place of the Duke. Have you never seen her before? *Tout Paris* speaks of her. C'est une femme très distinguée. Her husband has just been sent off to Mexico on a special mission. The Emperor dislikes her a little, but it's simply because he is afraid of her influence on M——. When the Duke cannot himself chaperon the beautiful but somewhat awkward Muscovite, the Countess does it. Should you intend to get some day into a scrape, or have some business to transact with the Government, I give you the advice to try and get the Countess's door thrown open to you. You would be pretty safe then. Bon-soir, mon cher; I am in a hurry.'

Chabot did not expect to get into any scrape, or to have any business with the French Government, but he would certainly have given a good deal to get at the Countess. Although the brief biographical notice he had just been supplied with was not of a very attractive or encouraging nature, a splendid woman, wrapped in yellow and cherry-red, stood for several nights by his bedside; every friend with whom he had to talk for the next few days had to say or to hear something about the Countess; and every elegant woman with dark hair that passed through the *Bois* at the fashionable hours, was sure to be anxiously stared at during the whole of that week. Chabot had been obviously struck by a current of that unknown force which some people call affinity, others fatality, but which is always sure to leave upon

a man of Chabot's nature a lasting, if not an ineffaceable impression. Had Chabot remained any longer in Paris, he would probably have managed, one way or the other, to get an admission into the drawing-room of the Countess; and would very likely have soon seen that it was a place where, as Balzac says, there were committed in a single evening more crimes in thoughts and words than any criminal court has ever punished, and where no man could move without exposing himself to the double danger of getting effeminated and materialized at the same time. But circumstances arranged it that my friend had to leave Paris within a few weeks after the aforesaid fatal night at the Opera; while the fact that his banker's account was speedily drawing towards a close, made him soon busy with matters which did not leave much room for reminiscences, however pleasant. And by-and-by the speedy literary success he obtained, together with political, newspaper, and club interests, and the whole of the London atmosphere, made him apparently quite forget the yellow and cherry-red mirage.

More than five years had passed. Chabot had become one of the most distinguished writers of what is considered the first press in the world. He was then a little over thirty years of age; enjoyed an income of about a thousand a year, and was as free of debts or family encumbrances as an Alpine eagle. The defeat of the French during August 1870, and the loss of prestige which he naturally incurred, together with the cause of which he had made himself the advocate, were, since the death of his parents, the first real griefs he had ever experienced. They rendered him morose, and taciturn to a degree which astonished all his fellow workmen who happened to

meet him during his pilgrimage, and which was a matter of long comment in the smoking-room of the Hôtel du Rhin, at Amiens, where a large company of 'Specials' and 'Our owns,' driven back from Paris, Sedan, and Châlons, was assembled on an evening at the end of October. This asylum Chabot also reached by-and-by, and, the first evening of his arrival, after having shaken hands with several of these gentlemen, he retired to his room under pretence of strong headache, but in reality for the purpose of writing another letter attempting to prove all the chances of success the French still possessed, and all the improbability of Paris, and still less Amiens, ever being taken. On the next day, however, he would not be allowed to have headache again, for his friends wanted to know what he thought of the state of affairs; and so a row of half-a-dozen chairs was turned up at the table-d'hôte long before the dinner began, and a few bottles of champagne ordered to be kept in ice for 'les Anglais.'

'Who is that lady in black?' asked he of J. G. Pearson, of the 'Morning Telegram,' pointing to a woman sitting rather isolated, and at the end of a table at which something like fifty sad-looking provincial people were closely packed.

'It's Marguerite Bellanger,' replied Pearson, who had earned on his paper a great reputation for knowledge of everything about the Tuileries. 'She is staying here under the assumed name of Countess Something.'

'I can assure you it is not the Bellanger. I have seen that celebrity several times. She is fair, and by no means so stout,' said Chabot.

'But she may have got stouter since, and may have dyed her hair.

At all events, it is some *bouche inutile*, as they very appropriately call them now. . . And so you say that General Faidherbe is to take the command, to move on Amiens to strengthen us, and to advance, perhaps, still farther. That's very important, I think,' said Pearson, and began to describe all the advantages Amiens now presented as a point of observation, while Chabot was endeavouring to recollect where he had seen the lady in black. But he had not to trouble himself long with this question, for the landlord stood already behind his chair with the travellers' book in his hand, and the request that 'monsieur' would be so kind as to give him his passport, and to write down his name, profession, nationality, and destination. No sooner did Chabot take the book in his hands than he saw the name of La Comtesse de Pellet, written in clear French handwriting.

'Is this lady gone?' asked he of the landlord.

'Non, monsieur. She is sitting opposite you at the other end of the table. And the eyes of Chabot and the Countess met, as the landlord pointed with his pen to where she sat.

There is scarcely any need to say that on the very next day, at breakfast, an occasion presented itself for Chabot to speak to the Countess. Newspapers and letters being distributed, every one began to communicate the news he got; and Chabot, to whom several copies of English papers were handed, and who no longer sat so far away from the Countess, managed somehow to have a question or two put to him concerning what the 'Times' was saying. And whilst she was thus speaking to him, Chabot tried to recollect those features which struck him once as being so beautiful. But five or

six years of Parisian life under the Empire mean a good deal—and creoles into the bargain soon get old. So what was health and strength then, could be easily called stoutness now; the dark, formerly piercing eyes, had something lazy and languishing about them; the bright colours which once played through the sun-burnt satin skin, were almost wan now; there were even a couple of slight wrinkles to be traced on the forehead. But Chabot could, not, of course, be expected to enter into all these details; and though some change had been ascertained even by him, he attributed it chiefly to the anxiety which every Frenchwoman was then exposed to. The fact that people seemed to fly from the Countess, and to speak of her as of a *bouche inutile*, revolted him, and he thought it was his duty as a gentleman to exonerate the Countess from any unfavourable suspicions by showing her the greatest possible respect. The lady herself, quite unconsciously, facilitated him in this work. Highly pleased by his irreproachable French, she soon asked him whether he was really an Englishman.

‘I am an Irishman, madame; but of French origin. My name is Chabot.’

‘Well, I knew you could not be English. For me Irish or English is all the same. You are French to all intents and purposes. Chabot is one of our best names. I am the Countess de Pellet,’—and stretching him out her hand, which Chabot had a great mind to kiss, but which he contented himself with simply shaking. But this conversation, besides the immediate advantageous impression it produced on the few persons present in the dining-room, gave Chabot the right to declare all that had been whispered about

the Countess to be a positive calamity, and to sit by her side at dinner. Since he sat there, his friends did so too, and the Countess, quite isolated but yesterday, had now a little court of English journalists around her. She presented to these gentlemen more than the mere attraction of a handsome and clever woman, for without alluding in any way as to what he knew concerning the Duc de M——, Chabot told his friends that the Countess was an influential person among Imperialists; and, consequently several of the ‘specials’ thought that they might get out of her some information that would, perhaps, repay their efforts to make themselves agreeable. The sitting-room of the Countess was, therefore, pretty full in the evenings, and the lady whom the provincial mamas knew for certain to be Marguerite Bellanger, was now suddenly transformed into the Countess de Pellet, a very dangerous person, in constant communication with English journalists, who, as everybody knew, were hostile to France.

On one of such evenings, the company remained together rather late. The Empire, Gambetta, the visit of Thiers to the European courts, the rumours of an armistice, the taking and retaking of Le Bourget, and a good many other topics, were warmly discussed. The Countess was very eloquent, argued more than any of her guests, seemed to know everything, and to be strongly disinclined to listen to any one. Those who attempted to say a word in favour of the Republic or of the government of the Fourth of September, had to stand a torrent of words which might have been fairly called a scolding. Chabot got the worst of it; for, besides being by his ideas disposed in

favour of the Republic, he saw the woman brightened and enlivened by the discussion, and his thoughts went, for some reason, back to the opera night, to the Duc de M——, and caused him to dislike the Empire more than ever, and to speak of it in the bitterest terms.

'I believe in Gambetta,' remarked the philosophical representative of the 'Evening News,' 'because what France wants, before everything else, is a man, and Gambetta is a thorough man to the edge of his nails. If France had now a Bismarck of her own, as she had formerly in the person of the Duc de M——, she would never have known her present disasters.'

'Certainly not,' retorted the Countess, 'but please don't compare the Duc de M—— to a *petit sauteur*, like Monsieur Gambettta, (she mockingly insisted upon the double t).

'You seem to have a very high opinion of the defunct Duke, Madame la Comtesse,' said Chabot, with a slight, almost imperceptible touch of bitterness.

'I hate him as a man. I hold him to have been a villain. But I think no one, not even you, Monsieur Chabot, hostile though you be to the Imperialists, will deny his having been a man of genius.'

The clock on the mantel-piece struck twelve, and made the Countess suddenly break off the controversy by half singing and half declaiming—

'Minuit, chrétiens! c'est l'heure solennelle,
Où l'Homme-Dieu descendit jusqu'à nous,
Pour effacer la tache originelle,
Et de son Père arrêter le courroux.'

'We must part, messieurs. It is getting too late,' added she.

'But madame knows, perhaps,

that Englishmen never retire to bed without a prayer,' said Chabot, who became, for some reason or other, almost radiant; 'and since you have just begun one of the most beautiful of hymns, it would be, perhaps, just as well to give the whole of it, and so to show, by praying with us, that you forgive us our political disagreements with you.'

'Oh, no; it would disturb all the sleeping beauties of this hotel, and I should have to contemplate still longer faces than usual at to-morrow's breakfast-table.'

But Chabot as well as his friends insisted so much on having the whole of Adam's 'Noël' sung to them, that the Countess, half annoyed, half pleased, said, as if to herself: 'After all, what does it matter to me what these bourgeois will think?' and threw open her piano. Chabot, being passionately fond of music, and the celebrated 'Noël' being one of his favourite pieces, was burning with delight. And it must be said that the Countess sang it with an expression and in a style that proved more than satisfactory to the whole of the company. 'Bravo! charming! delightful!' fell upon the lady on all sides when she stood up from her piano, brightly coloured by the exertion as much, perhaps, as by a whole host of reminiscences that seemed to have crossed her mind while she was singing.

'I shall really not be able to shut my eyes for the whole of the night,' said Pearson.

'Oh, I should be sorry for that,' answered the Countess; 'though I am sure that your constitution is not one likely to be endangered by a sleepless night. But you see how unfortunate I am. I sang this 'Noël' once at the Madeleine, and people complained of not having been able to pray.

Now you say, you shall not be able to sleep. Still, you must go and try. Bon-soir, messieurs. Cette fois je vous mets carrément à la porte,' and she pushed the whole company outside, much in the same fashion as a shepherd drives a flock of lambs out of a fold.

'Charming woman,' said Pearson, bidding good-night to his friends; 'you seem, Chabot, to be quite in love with her.'

'Don't be afraid for me, dear Pearson,' retorted Chabot, entering his room; but the words, 'a villain,' 'I hate him,' alternately with the splendid sounds of 'Minuit chrétiens! c'est l'heure solennelle,' were resounding in his ears long after he had been in bed and had blown out his candle.

On the next morning, when Chabot was retuning to breakfast from a ramble about the fortifications, the hotel maid handed him a card. 'Passez chez moi, S.V.P.' was written in pencil under the name of the Countess. 'Madame la Comtesse is not quite well, and will not go down to the dining-room,' added the servant. Chabot gave her a five-franc piece, and went, apparently quite unconcerned, to join his friends at breakfast, after which he retired under the pretence of having much to write. What was the nature of the conversation which took place between my friend and the creole, I know but vaguely. All that has transpired is, that the lady professed to have been a bearer of some Imperialist communications which she wanted to get through the iron hoop with which the Prussians had already surrounded Paris, and that she expected to have Chabot's assistance in her hazardous project. She addressed herself to Chabot on the plea that he was the only 'vrai gentleman' she could see around her and therefore the only man likely not to

refuse such a request on the part of a lady. She said also that with an English passport and with his position as correspondent of a great English paper to protect them, they could safely venture upon a good many things in which alone, or in company of a Frenchman, she would be frustrated at the very outset, and incur the risk of being shot by the first French or German sentry. Had Chabot even any sympathy for the Imperialist cause he was thus asked to serve, he would at once have seen the impracticability of the plan. But as matters stood, the design appeared to him not only foolish, but almost criminal. His refusal was, therefore, as peremptory as courtesy allowed; but the shrewd creole seemed to have anticipated such a refusal, and to have prepared herself for a long struggle. For more than three hours did she keep her prey under the influence of all the artifices, circumstances and her nature placed at her disposal. She complained of being unwell, and she really looked quite pale under the false light of lowered green curtains and of a fire lighted notwithstanding that it was by no means cold as yet. A snow-white dressing-gown and a profusion of black hair falling loose down her shoulders on the arms of the easy chair she sat in, made her appear like some marble bacchante sitting at rest. Chabot was almost captured, and it is by no means certain that he would not have given in, had not the influence of a northern climate, of business-like British training, and of a good deal of materialistic tendencies inherited from his father not come to his rescue. He stood bravely against the boldest attacks, and the enemy began already to lose all hopes of success, when Chabot did a very foolish thing. His nervous system

was so heavily taxed by the trial he was exposed to, that the name of the Duc de M—— dropped from his lips as a final argument for his refusing to give any aid to a cause which would have been his cause, had he been alive still. The whole ground upon which the battle was fought changed instantaneously. All the cunning woman aimed at as yet, was to take in a man whom she thought a stranger to her; while Chabot now disclosed to her, by a single false move, that he had been already taken in years ago, when she would not have thought of looking at him. One could have read on the face of the Countess how the poor man was, in the twinkling of an eye, transformed into the bondsman of the woman to whom he had been as yet but an object of covetousness. Chabot had not time to notice his mistake, as she jumped from her chair and stood close to him, holding both his hands, and whispering, 'You must.'

'No, I shan't,' answered he, almost with a shivering.

'You must,' repeated the woman, still more imperatively, and pressing so closely upon the unfortunate man that, to free himself, he had to throw her back upon her chair and to jump at his hat. But, before he could reach it, the door was locked, and the Countess stood, leaning her back against it in one of those half-studied, half-spontaneous attitudes which are the force of so many French dramatic actresses.

'Well, if it is so,' cried out Chabot, in a voice of real anger, 'then tell me, at least, what is it that you want in Paris. Is it only to rescue some more compromising papers of that pretty couple, your master and mistress? Is it simply to get them more money than they were able to take with them? Or is it really to make

an attempt to throw upon France once more all the corruption, misery, and moral degradation she has so long endured?'

'I hope, mon cher monsieur, that you will measure your language when addressing me,' coolly replied the Countess, taking the key out of the door lock and going towards a little Russian leather bag lying on her writing-table. 'Here are the letters. I don't know myself what they contain. They are all sealed as you see.'

She had scarcely time to say that, and to open the bag, when all the letters, about half a dozen in number, were flying into the fire before Chabot had even taken the trouble to look at them. 'Monsieur, mais vous êtes fou!' exclaimed the enraged woman, rushing towards the fire-place to rescue the already smoking papers. But Chabot vigorously stopped her, and a perfect struggle ensued between him and the woman who had but a moment before felt her prey throbbing in her hands. The struggle did not last long. In a minute or two there was no longer any trace of the letters, and the bold creole was lying apparently senseless on the sofa. Chabot was for a moment quite frightened by what he had done; but the aspect of the woman soon recalled him to his sense. He opened the windows, and with the aid of fresh air, water, eau-de-cologne, and the toilette vinegar, managed soon to make the Countess recover. From what he subsequently learned of this lady, he concluded that she would have probably just as soon recovered without any aid. But Chabot did not know this then, and when he heard her saying, on opening her eyes: 'Sortez, monsieur; veuillez me laisser seule,' he was almost as relieved as if he had seen a friend saved from imminent death. Gently, with al-

most a repenting expression in his face, was he upon this order, about to leave the room, when he noticed that the door would not open. He had, of course, to look for the key; could not find it, and consequently soon discovered himself standing upon his knees by the side of the sofa upon which the Countess was still prostrated.

'You are a true Englishman,' said she, with her eyes still shut, and in answer to all his demands of pardon. 'You have almost killed a woman, ruined all her plans; perhaps, injured the greatest interest of France; and, if the key had been in the door, you would probably be quietly reading the *'Times'* or coldly discussing with your friends the comparative merits of Prussian and French tactics. Oh! how I curse the moment I entertained the idea of speaking to you. . . . My head is a perfect chaos. . . . What shall I do, gracious God?' and she seemed quite ready to faint once more under the pressure of her thoughts. Chabot stood all the time by her side, bringing in, now and then, some desultory sentence, or listening to a new reproach. Fully an hour of this unbearable suspense passed before their conversation took something like an intelligible, practical turn. But, not having been present, I am utterly unable to say what its gist was. Pearson was the only person who seemed to have heard something, sitting unnoticed with a couple of provincial French papers, and a worn out *'Guide Joanne'* (his usual source of information), under the Countess's window, which Chabot had opened. On the very same evening, he had to write a private letter to his editor, pointing out the desirability of a fresh remittance in anticipation of a probable interruption of communications with the

North where an attack of the Prussians was soon expected, and in a post-scriptum to this letter, he added—

'Chabot is thoroughly enjoying himself, here. He got hold of some Imperialist Countess, and is now about to despatch her to London, where all the Imperialists are to take their head-quarters. I overheard, by accident, the lady comforting him with the assurance that, though the disastrous war had made her lose everything, she would not fall too heavily upon his pocket; for, should the Empire not be soon re-established, she would take to the operative stage, and most thankfully return him the little outlays he may make for her. If Chabot's people are, as I heard from you, not quite satisfied with his services as a special correspondent, they may, perhaps, find a compensation in what he is likely to achieve next season, as a high-life *impresario*.'

There is hardly any need to say what was Pearson's intention in adding this post-scriptum, and that, within forty-eight hours after this letter had been posted, the contents of its post-scriptum were known in every newspaper-office in London, including that of Chabot. Every one seemed to have some interest in spreading it—quite confidentially, of course, and among his most intimate friends only. And the immediate result of this was, that Chabot got, in answer to his next demand for money, a draft for twenty-five pounds only, instead of the usual fifty pounds, and this merely with the manager's compliments, instead of being accompanied, as formerly, by a letter from Dr. Stright himself, the editor, requesting 'my dear Chabot' not to deny himself any comfort, not to expose himself to any unnecessary danger, and to take good care of his health in the

forthcoming bad season. My friend's barometer was evidently falling, and some very nasty weather was presaged to him on his return to London. A vague foreshadowing of this presented itself to me on board the Calais steamer, when I was returning to England in the beginning of 1871. One of our worthy *confrères*, crossing the Channel on the same boat with me, had just left Pearson at Chanzy's headquarters, and, of course, knew all about Chabot's 'losing his *prestige*' and getting entangled with some woman. 'I was told,' said he, that it was a rather grand and romantic sort of affair—some French countess, reduced in circumstances by Bismarck and the needle-gun. But, for a man of Chabot's ideas and temperament, the grander and more romantic the thing is, the worse it becomes, I am afraid. He is sure to go to the dogs. I should be really very sorry for it, he is an exceedingly nice fellow.'

And Chabot did go 'to the dogs,' quietly, speedily, and scarcely noticing his down-hill journey. He had a house at Hammersmith, and was supposed to live there; but in reality, a second-floor studio in Bolton Street was the place where, from early in the morning till late in the evening, he was at the service of the Countess, who managed to make of him a valet and a commissionaire as easily and quickly as if he had been a negro of her native island. She intensely disliked everybody and everything English, could not understand a single word of the tongue of the country, and would not learn it; and if Chabot was not at hand any time he was wanted to speak for her or to serve her, he was sure, on his arrival, to hear most unceremonious reproaches, extravagant demands, and endless abuse of England and the English, with occa-

sional renewal of 'I curse the moment when I had the idea to speak to you!' Chabot often thought, when listening to all this, 'But did I ask her to come? and why does she not go back?' but he never had the courage to give utterance to such thoughts. So that these little, and strictly private, rows were, as a rule, always followed on his part by new concessions and a new increase of expenses, which the Countess, of course, seemed not to notice at all. On her way to London she called at Brussels, where her little daughter and her chambermaid were left in custody of some friends. Both were, of course, taken over. The Countess said she could not live without the dear little thing. Yet, when the little thing was there, it soon turned out that 'la petite m'agace,' and that she must have her own room and a governess to look after her. The governess was selected with as little French as possible, so as to compel the child to learn 'cette détestable langue;' but until the child had begun to know something of English, Chabot had two persons more to attend to, as an interpreter, and occasionally as a reconciler, of the Parisian views of the mother and daughter with the Yorkshire views of Miss Fannylove. Happily enough, the child was a most intelligent one; and in less than six weeks the little girl was not only able to perform all her tricks on Miss Fannylove in fluent English, but to take upon herself a good bit of Chabot's duties as an interpreter; leaving him thus a little more time for rest from the hardest of all penal servitudes—that of attending to the caprices of a spoiled Parisian woman, with high-life pretensions and a beggar's means.

The Yorkshire governess, a French chambermaid, a Scotch page-boy, an Irish house-servant, and a Bri-

tish leader-writer were, however, not the whole of the staff of Countess de Pellet's personal attendants. In addition to these, there was a Don Basilio, maestro di musica, in the person of Signor Frutti, professor of singing; a teacher of the Italian language, the old Signor Tedesco; and an Alsatian lady, Madame Baguette, as accompanist: for the Countess said it was absolutely impossible for an artiste to be at her piano herself during her studies. Chabot, of course, did not wish to show to any one that the money to pay for all this, and for a good many things besides, did not come from the Countess's own pocket; and she had also requested at the outset that everything should be done in her name. Consequently, as long as Chabot could provide the cash wanted, the lady was considered by every one as 'a rather grand sort of affair;' and the words, 'the Countess,' were uttered by all the house people much in the same solemn tone in which the word 'Grace,' or 'the Queen,' is uttered in a select ladies' boarding-school. Some six months passed in this way, things being, apparently, more than 'all right.' The season came on; and the Countess—assuming the *nom de guerre* of Valérie Valo—gave two grand concerts, with the assistance of the best artistes that could be found. The spacious St. John's Hall was quite full on both occasions; and, after the first concert, it was generally acknowledged by the press that the distinguished lady who made, on this occasion, her first appearance before the British public, produced the most favourable impression. The Countess herself said everywhere, and wrote to all her friends in France, that she made 'un début splendide,' and had throughout 'un succès épatant.' Chabot, who gave himself no end of trouble to

arrive at this result, and whom each concert had cost about a hundred pounds, in addition to a couple of weeks of running about, seeing musical critics, sending out tickets, and doing lots of similar work he was quite unaccustomed to, seemed also satisfied with what had been arrived at. The only drawback he felt, but did not wish to acknowledge, was, that about thirty shillings only were taken at the doors on each of the occasions, and that the success of the aspirant was chiefly the result of complimentary dispositions on the part of a public who had nothing to pay for the entertainment. In fact, when Chabot made another round of visits to his friends of the press, with a view to thank them for their notices, those of them who knew anything about music, said to him something that could be easily put in this way: 'Of course, my good fellow, I am always glad to oblige you; but I must say, candidly, that your *protégée* has a good deal more to learn before she can claim to become an artiste. It is all very well for an amateur, and for a drawing-room. But a big hall requires a great deal more. The lady is at present inclined to get out of tune sometimes, and her medium, too, wants more exercise, with a view to see whether it cannot be strengthened a little.' Chabot would, probably, have arrived at the same conclusion if he had been an unconcerned person; but, as matters stood, these remarks almost offended him, and threw cold water upon his relations to a good many of his friends. He attempted, however, quietly to call the Countess's attention to these opinions, in the hope that they would make her exert herself more. But all he could get in answer was, that his friends were asses, who did not understand anything, and that it was highly

rude and improper on his part to come and repeat to an artiste and a 'femme du monde' such stupid and misplaced criticisms. Yet I have reason to believe that the 'femme du monde,' at least, if not the 'artiste,' would not have felt so much offended, if her inclination to go out of tune had alone been mentioned; for, after all, she knew that this was a thing to be remedied by study. But what really vexed her was the allusion to her medium, of which she might have been really proud once, and which, under the influence of suppers and all sorts of other pleasant parties indulged in under the Empire, had become something very like that of Blanche D'Antigny. The Countess was quite aware of that; nothing vexed her more than that; and nothing gave afterwards greater pleasure to Chabot than to be able, in his rare moments of sarcastic disposition, to say, about any elegant French lady he met in the street or the theatres, 'C'est peut-être encore un médium abîmé sous l'Empire.'

Meanwhile all sorts of unpleasant rumours reached me concerning the state of Chabot's affairs. He lost his position almost immediately after his return to London, and it was Pearson that got into his place. Unpaid bills and debts rose on all sides, like mushrooms. He sold out at Hammersmith everything that could be sold, from the leasedown to a good many reference books, without which scarcely any work was possible for a journalist. But all this seemed still insufficient to fill the gulf which was already created, and which became larger and larger every day. I did as the great majority of his friends have done—I avoided seeing him, and watched only, through the papers, whether Madame Valérie Valo was not beginning 'to take' somewhere, and whether there was

not at least, in that way, some hope of rescue for the poor man; for I had a hint from Signor Frutti, that the distinguished lady had made up her mind 'de planter là cet imbécile,' as soon as she could see her way clear to the Opera, or anywhere else; and I knew that the day Chabot would have been liberated from the huge parasite which devoured him, he would at once regain all his former brightness, brain-power, and unabating energy for work. Unhappily, the papers gave me always the same information—that for nothing, Madame Valérie Valo could sing as much as she liked in the endless concerts given during the season; but money no one seemed disposed to give her; and so Chabot was now tied to her by misery still more strongly than by the illusions that had attracted him formerly.

Returning to London in September 1871, I did not find the Countess any more in the house; but I found Chabot still in his garret. She went away, signing a rather heavy bill which my friend had to endorse, and for the payment of which his person was to remain a security. But a good many debts remained to be paid outside; and I knew that Chabot was often dining on cold pork, at the public-house of one of the back streets. I met him once going out of such an establishment, in the middle of last winter. He had no overcoat on him, and looked quite shivery; and I was forgetful enough to remark to him, that it was very imprudent on his part to expose his health in that way. 'Well, you are an innocent fellow, Azamat! As if you did not know that I like comfort too much to forget putting on a warm coat when it's cold! My coat is still *au dou* since a memorable evening when I had threepence in my pocket, and when

she would not leave me in peace unless I took her to some theatre, where she again felt dull, because unable to understand a single word.'

'Now, I earnestly hope that all this will be soon over, since you don't see her any more,' said I, by way of mending my misplaced remark.

'Who told you that I don't see her any more? I see her every day as usual.'

'Is it really so? And for how long is it to last?' asked I, quite grieved to learn that the poor fellow was still clinging to the woman who robbed him of mind, soul, body and all. "The grave alone," says a proverb, "makes the hump-backed straight."

'Well, we shall see. At all events, you need not take the last hope of the fool away. I have done for her what I should not have done for a daughter, a sister, or a wife, and I don't mind anything that has happened. But I must have the satisfaction of knowing that she is an honest woman. Else——' He closed his fist, and a lightning of deep anger crossed his worn out face.

'Look here, my boy, this is quite foolish. You pick up the worst of all imaginable *chevalières d'industrie*—a high-life *chevalière d'industrie* of the second Empire—and wish to make of her a virgin

priestess, or a hard-working English Madonna. Have you forgotten what she used often to say in the moments of her cynical boasting? That she would break down any enemy with two weapons: time and inertia.'

'And you have, probably, forgotten what the invariable repartee of your obstinate Irish friend was on such occasions: "Qui vivra, verra." Good-bye, Azamat. You are getting rather too English, I am afraid.'

I have not since heard of Chabot, nor seen him; but I met the lady twice. On one occasion, Madame Valérie Valo was dining gaily in the company of some lawyers at the Star and Garter; on the other, the Countess de Pellet was parading along Oxford Street on the arm of her husband, who came over from France at her request. She is learning English, and is doing the hypocrite, because she knows that both pay well in England. She is mixing with lawyers, because she is not quite sure that Chabot will not get her into trouble, and thinks she may as well have a few competent persons to back her. But amidst all this, the sharp eye of this worthy descendant of pirates is looking out for some new booty, and for a new barque to carry her to some new country. Let us hope that we may have to bid her an early farewell.

AZAMAT-BATUK.



SLEIGHING IN CANADA.

TO you who have 'seen Naples,' and yet not 'died,' I would say, 'By no means think of doing so until you have seen Canada on such a glorious, rare winter day as smiles down upon us now and then.' The skies, deeply, darkly, beautifully blue, with one or two great heaps of fleecy clouds tossed carelessly into the vast background of emptiness, looking so white and distinct that it seems, would you but lift up a hand, you could bury it in their snowy depths. The pure stretch of level snow, field after field dotted here and there with clumps of dark green pines, the softly-rounded hills rising gradually under their dazzling covering, and over all the blazing midday sun lighting and warming the silent beauty of the land; these make such a picture as once to behold is to remember for ever.

There is a calm and repose more utter than floats over the orange groves and blue lakes and shimmering, soundless bays of the 'land of song;' and one draws a long breath, drinking in a bounding life and vigour with the frosty air, that sends the quick, warm blood coursing through one's veins tumultuously. There are dark specks flitting over the snow and wheeling round in the clear air; and, as they draw near, they prove to be a flock of snow-birds, dainty and fragile, like wee ghosts of the noisy chatterers that filled the air with sounds of life and the music of their tiny poet-souls (no, they haven't souls; but it almost seems as if they had, sometimes) scarce two months ago. It seems impossible to believe that so short a time past we had balmy zephyrs and rippling streams, and that those naked spectres of

maple trees were glowing in such regal splendour of green and gold and crimson and delicate pink as you know not of in the 'right little, tight little island.' But the long, drowsy, dying days of Indian summer, when the sun hung in the heavens like a ball of fire, have glided by silent and shadowy, and the gorgeous livery of the maple groves has faded brown, and the leaves have dropped silently one by one, and the busy birdies have twittered a lingering farewell, and left the solemn beauty of the autumn days, to seek more genial winter quarters, and the shrinking, hesitating, reluctant virgin turns to her frosty bridegroom with sighing winds and tearful showers and dull gloom over all her one-time beauty. Gradually he took her to his freezing arms, and touched her rivers; and they stood still, twined like bands of silver for her decoration; and her trees—they held out their bare arms in mute appeal to the balmy winds and warm rains to release and reclothe them; and then he covered her over, from her vine-wreathed head to her shivering feet, with a pure white mantle, and decked her with icy diamonds and delicate and wondrous flagee of hoarfrost for a crown; and now, as she stands in her calm, cold, unsullied loveliness, is she not beautiful beyond description, exalted beyond praise? It is impossible to stay indoors on such a day as this. There are snow-shoes standing in the corner, and skates hanging in the hall; and there is a merry, resistless jingling of sleigh bells, and a vision of waving robes and dainty rugs and stamping horses before the window; and down go pen and paper, and

hurrah for the snow, the sunshine, and a sleigh ride!

We must put on the warmly-lined moccasins, gaily worked with beads and velvet by the squaws, who come round to sell their flashy handiwork from door to door. 'Goot moccasin; skin of deer, no sheep! squaw make him; red bead, shiny! Papoose no eat all day; some bread for old squaw at home. Seigner drunk down town. Buy moccasin; good walk in snow! How much him come?' And three dirty fingers are held up for answer. 'Him ver' cheap; papoose got not'ing to eat all day!' And the dirty child's staring eyes, as it peers from its blanket on its mother's back, *do* look starved and eager; and the mother's broken English is very plaintive and patient in its unconnected story of meek submission and harsh oppression. There is something very touching in the bent head and heavily-laden figure; something that goes right home to our woman-hearts in the gentle gaze of those liquid, fathomless, sad, brown eyes, so that we take the poor, tawdry-looking moccasins, and sigh as the thin fingers close over the three crisp dollar bills; and this brings us back to the time we lined them cosily with soft flannel, and put them on for the first time.

Charlie hardly had strength and patience to await the tedious process of wrapping and pinning and princking, which are the necessary prelude to an afternoon's dissipation, especially if it is to be concluded by a high tea with Mrs. Grimsby; but at last patience had its reward, and the hot bricks and warm shawls and soft-knitted 'clouds,' with the dancing, beating heart inside, and over them was safely tucked under the last buffalo robe, the whip cracks, the silvery bells jingle their merry

music, and we are off for a real Canadian sleigh ride.

There is something so exhilarating in the swift, gliding motion that, with every jingle of the bells, one feels a mad desire to prance about and sing or shout into the cold, clear, colourless air; but such a proceeding would be both difficult and dangerous with a pair of high-bred horses going at ever so many miles an hour, and in a tiny shell-shaped sleigh or 'cutter,' as we call it, of about three feet in width.

All these winter exercises—skating, snow-shoeing, and sleighing—make one's pulse bound and one's heart beat too fast for quietude; but in the skating and snow-shoeing the muscular exertion keeps the spirits within bounds, and the tongue silent—or, at least, does not make it noisier than usual—while sitting still in a sleigh becomes almost an impossibility; and we feel we must give vent to this excess of enthusiasm in some way, so we sing. There is a great, low, shallow box on runners, commonly dubbed a 'wood sleigh,' and in which a dozen merry-makers can be cosily packed with cushions and buffalo robes, that is often in use for rollicking excursions to ample farmhouses, where 'tea and turn out' is the programme of the evening. There are one or two of these vehicles in sight now, far off on the gleaming, beaten road; and across the country comes a faint echo of sleigh bells, and merry voices chanting the old Canadian 'boat song,' with which we join with a will, laughing a jovial good-day as our lighter vehicle whirls past them, and catching their ringing 'Row, brothers, row!' softer and softer as the distance grows between us.

Here we are whisking up the long pine-lined avenue and across the

level lawn, and unrolling ourselves, like great animated mummies, in the blaze and glare of a mammoth fire of pine logs, and toasting our moccasined feet in the grateful glow, while we munch golden russets, and crack hickory nuts with 'flat-irons.'

Through the wide windows we see the shadows lengthening, and the sun sinking to rest behind the snow-covered hills; and through the open door comes an agreeable odour of goodies preparing for tea.

Charlie wonders why people can't go sleigh-riding every day, and kind Mrs. Grimsby straightway invites a daily repetition of the visit until the sleighing is over, which he as gravely accepts. I must give you a peep at the charming tea-table in the middle of the pine-floored kitchen, a sniff of the delicate odours that tempt our hungry mouths, and I wish I could give you a taste of the dainties as well. Who shall tell of the peculiarly delicious compounds, known to the taste of man as 'tea-cakes,' which you, dear, clever Englishwomen don't in the least know how to make, stir ye never so wisely? Mrs. Grimsby knows, though; and she places the snowy pile on the oval table with a satisfied smile, that seems to say, 'There, ma'am, beat that if you can.' She does make the most charming teas; indeed, it is a perfection of the Canadian good-wife. They set their wits to work to devise new and enticing compositions, which all go under the one name, 'tea-cakes;' they set out their home-spun linen white and fine, and their home-made bread sweet and light; their newly-churned golden butter, their fresh fruity preserves and jellies, and clear virgin honey, and—oh, ye gods and diminutive fishes!—their much-to-be-admired tea-cakes, with a delightful com-

placency that is charming to behold; while they serve you generously, and parry praise and compliments with an ingenuity that is infinitely edifying and amusing.

Dear me! it is time to wrap up again, and be off in the still, clear moonlight, with cheerful good-nights from the hale old pioneer and his blooming helpmeet, and many entreaties to 'come soon again; you're always welcome!'

Home, through the gleaming white snow, over which the glancing steel runners glide noiselessly—home, past the gloomy pine groves and the bare maples, whose gaunt limbs are sheathed in a coating of shining ice, and hung with icicles like reversed tapers on a Christmas-tree—home, with the gay bells ringing fainter and fainter in my sleepy ears, while the frost nips my nose vengefully—home—and I wake with a start at Charlie's loud 'Whoa!' and see lights streaming out on the drive from the French windows, fighting the pale, wan moonlight with a ruddy glow, and blending with it out on the ghostly shrubs and leafless trees across the snow-covered croquet ground.

I know I am all one broad smile of delight as we stand for a moment on the steps, and look out on the fairy-like scene, for Charlie laughs and says, 'Happy, Mary?' And it seems as if a whole year of delight has been crowded into those six hours. It is with sparkling eyes and a great sigh that I turn to answer, 'I never saw anything so lovely in my life!' And there are tears of overpowering happiness in those same eyes, as his hand-clasp answers to the cry of my heart. Dear London Society, high and low, I would you had many memories as bright as the lights that bring back to me that 'Sleigh ride in Canada.'

MARY.



Stagecoach in Canada

Drawn by G. H. Bennett

level lawn, and unrolling ourselves, like great animated mummies, in the blaze and glare of a mammoth fire of pine logs, and toasting our macabrous feet in the grateful glow, while we munch golden russets, and crack hickory nuts with "flat-irons."

Through the wide windows we see the shadows lengthening, and the sun sinking to rest behind the snow-covered hills; and through the open door comes an agreeable odour of goodies preparing for tea.

Charlie wonders why people can't go sleigh-riding every day, and kind Mrs. Grimsby, who always invites a daily repetition of the visit until the sleighing is over, which he as gravely answers, "I must give you a peg at the charming hospitality in the middle of the pine forest, and a sniff of the delicious odour that hangs about the cozy hearth, and I would I could give you a taste of the dainties as well. Who shall tell of the peculiarly delicious compounds, known to the taste of man as 'tea-cakes,' which your dear, clever, and generous hostess in the last three years has made stir ye never at winter? Mrs. Grimsby knows, though; and she places the snowy pile on the oval table with a satisfied smile, that seems to say, 'There, ma'am, beat that if you can.' She does make the most charming teas; indeed, it is a perfection of the Canadian good-wife. They set their wife to work to devise new and enticing compositions, which all go under the one name, 'tea-cakes;' they set out these fluted-spun linen white and fine, and their home-made bread sweet and light; their newly-churned golden butter, their fresh fruity preserves and jellies, and clear virgin honey, and—oh, ye gods and diminutive fishes!—their much-to-be-admired tea-cakes, with a delightful com-

position that is charming to behold, while they serve you green peas, and perry prunes, and macabrousments with an ingenuity that is definitely edifying and amusing.

Dear me! it is time to wrap up again, and be off in the still, clear moonlight, with cheerful good-byes from the hale old pioneer and his blooming helpmeet, and many entreaties to "come soon again— you're always welcome!"

Home, through the gleaming white snow, over which the glancing runners glide noiselessly—home, past the gloomy pine groves and the bare maples, whose gaunt branches sheathed in a coating of shining ice, and hung with icicles like reversed tapers on a Christmas-tree—home, with the gay bells ringing fainter and fainter in my sleepy ears, while the frost upon my nose "waggefully"—home—and I wake with a start at Charlie's door, "Where's my light?" streaming out on the drive from the French windows, fighting the pale, wintry moonlight with a white glare, and showing with its own light the path of the sleigh, and the snow-covered, marked ground.

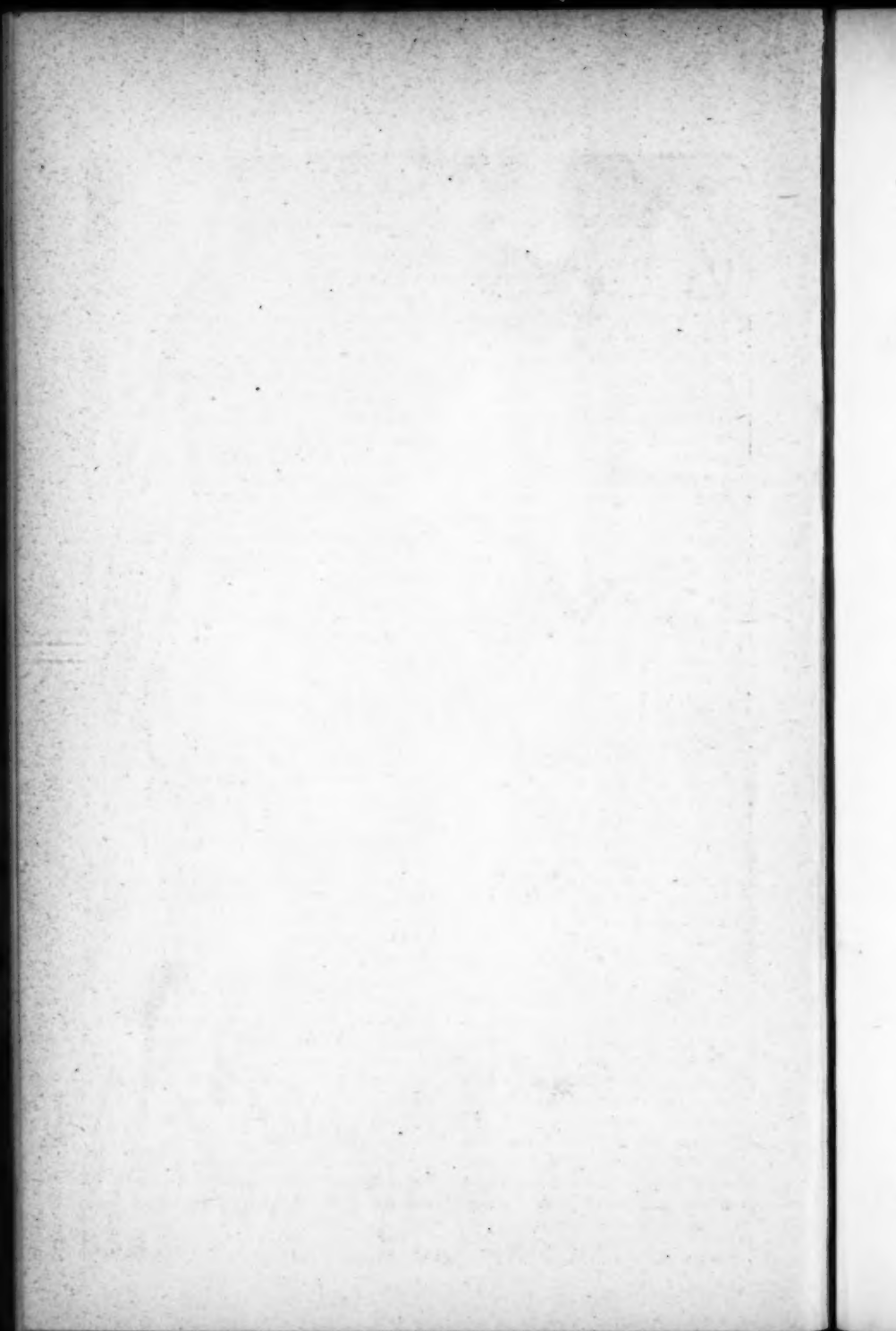
I know I am all one broad smile of delight as we stand for a moment on the steps, and look out at the fairy-like scene, for Charlie laughs and says, 'Happy, Mary?' And it seems as if a whole year of delight has been crowded into those six hours. It is with sparkling eyes and a great sigh that I turn to answer, 'I never saw anything so lovely in my life.' And then we tears of overpowering happiness in those same eyes, as his hand-clasp answers to the cry of my heart. Dear London Society, high and low, I would you had many memories as bright as the lights that bring back to me that 'Sleigh ride in Canada.'

MARY.



Drawn by C. O. Murray.]

SLEIGHING IN CANADA



THE MILKWOMAN.

BY JAMES GREENWOOD, 'THE AMATEUR CASUAL.'

ONCE upon a time, the maiden who milked the cow with the crumpled horn, and who, after that healthful and invigorating occupation, poised her snow-white pail on her head, and tripped it over the dewy grass, while the soaring lark was not yet far advanced with his morning hymn—the British milkmaid, by universal acclamation, was allowed to be the very image and reflection of simplicity and innocence. Hogarth so pictured her; so she appeared in almost every romance written prior to the present generation; so she was depicted on the stage, where thrilling domestic drama was enacted. There were other maids who figured in domestic drama—flower-girls, watercress-girls, millers' maids, and chamber-maids—but in one and all of these there was developed an amount of archness and worldly wisdom that in some degree prepared the audience for the possibility of her yielding to the dazzling temptations, and wiles and fair-sounding persuasions by which the fascinating villain with the cloak and glossy whiskers imposed on her. To be sure, the audience expressed no disapprobation when her virtuous young lover, in response to her ringing shrieks for help, appeared most opportunely at the garret-window, and shot the libertine through the heart; but, could they have brought him to life again, and tried him in cool blood, the probabilities are that they would have found him guilty with extenuating circumstances. But when a little milkmaid was made the victim—when some pink-and-white pretty creature, in spotless muslin and patent-leather high-

heeled shoes, with rosettes that contrasted bewitchingly with the dainty stockings—was in danger of becoming the prey of the ruthless monster in the cloak, then the fury of pit and gallery knew no bounds, and the actor's perfect delineation of the villain's part could scarcely save him from a storm of indignant hisses.

But the typical milkmaid is defunct—dead and buried as undoubtedly as that model mother of the race, the Dairyman's Daughter, whose unpretentious tomb is an unfailing attraction for stage-coach tourists in the Isle of Wight, who stay for refreshment at the White Lion at Arreton. 'As innocent as a milkmaid,' indeed! It might go down very well as a joke in a burlesque; but such a comparison, made in sober earnest, would now be received pretty much as if one spoke of an honest horse-dealer, or an immaculate trader in marine stores. The milkmaid depicted on the accompanying page, making allowance for her weatherproof habiliments, is by no means a wicked or designing-looking person. But we know. Our good friend the 'Milk Journal' has 'interviewed' her in his laboratory, and she has come out anything but guiltless. Her frank and open countenance, the fearless manner in which she has raised the lid of her pail sheer under the nose of the gossip-loving maid-of-all-work, should bespeak her honest; but the odds are fearfully against the rash assumption. She may not be responsible for the counterfeit; but she knows quite well that the contents of her pails is not milk. She is in the secret; but it does not follow that she has a diabolical relish for it. Nay, we

are willing, for our artist's sake, to take her on trust, and believe that it is not her will, but her poverty consents that she shall be an agent in the purveying of spurious milk. Then it becomes interesting to know what she and the maid-of-all-work are in such earnest discussion about. Can it be concerning the 'young man' of the latter? Bread and milk are intimately associated—perhaps the milkwoman brings her news of the baker. No; for in that case there would be a twinkle in the milkwoman's eye, and she would not stand, as she does, with a space between her and the gate. She would be closer to the area, leaning against the railings, and bending her head to whisper the stealthy message. Nor would the maid, whose work is always, look so sedate and grave. She would not carry her hands folded under her apron. Cold! She would not feel in the least degree cold if the talk was of *him*. No; the conversation is of something more grave than sweethearting. Perhaps there is sickness in the house. It is not impossible that the maid's chilliness may, in part, be accounted for by her having recently emerged from the warm chamber in which the little patient is lying so weak and ill—some small child, maybe, brought by fever so low that it can scarcely eat at all, while its very existence depends entirely on its taking nourishment. 'The only thing it can swallow, poor little thing,' says the sympathetic maid, 'is a little milk and arrowroot, and the doctor says that unless she has this very frequently, she can do no other than sink and die.' This must be bad for the matronly milk-carrier, who, perhaps, has babies of her own. She knows all about the stuff in the cans, and her mental reflection must be that it will go hard with the poor little

invalid if its convalescence depends on the nourishing properties it contains. She thinks of the water in which the original dairy produce was drowned, and of the 'mysterious colouring' that was afterwards added to give its pale corse something of the hue of vitality and health, and she feels like an evil conspirator. Perhaps to-morrow she may find the white blinds drawn close at that house, and the maid-of-all-work with red eyes and tearful; then will that conscience-stricken milkwoman turn away, feeling bitterly the pressure on her shoulders of her yoke of servitude, while her pails hang a dead weight on her hands. Stern necessity compels her to complete her round, and her cry resounds in the crisp frosty air, 'Mee-oh! Mee-oh!' but it has lost its mellowness. There are very few who notice the difference, and those, probably, attribute it to a sore throat—to a cold in the milkwoman's head, perhaps—but we, who are in the secret, know that it is the milkwoman's heart, and not her throat, that is sore, and that, were she not able to find expression for her remorse in that doleful wail of 'Me-oh!' she might be driven to further acts of adulteration by weeping into her milk-cans.

Now, had she been a carrier in the service of the Seal and Soft-sawder Dairy Company, it would have been impossible for her to commit herself in the way above mentioned. The Seal and Soft-sawder Company, shrewdly alert in the interests of their customers, and with full knowledge of the danger of leading milk-carriers, maid or male, into temptation, adopt the wise precaution of securing the lids of the pails their servants carry out by means of sealing-wax, making it imperative on them to serve the customer from a tap inserted at the vessel's

base. This is an excellent idea. Folks believe in seals, and they have a right to do so; and when a milkman affixes his, and publicly proclaims it, it is as though he cried out, 'Behold my pledge and guarantee! By this red wax and the symbol impressed on it I declare that within this vessel is purity alone. The milk from my establishment has not been, and cannot possibly be tampered with; it is real and unadulterated.' Nothing, seemingly, could be more straightforward than this; but alas! analysis has shown that, in many cases, the sealed lid 'dodge' is but an elaboration of deception. Somehow (the upright dairyman shrugs his shoulders, and points significantly to his rascally carrier) water, and worse, does find its way into these sealed receptacles, and consumers are cheated, after all. The milk-merchant cannot account for it, of course. He informs you blandly that he has been at a great expense in providing these new pails to obviate the evil you complain of, and that the failure of his system (if, as you aver, it is a failure) is quite a mystery to him. Perhaps, however, if the tongues, as well as the pails, of the carriers were not sealed, the seeming mystery might be speedily, if not satisfactorily, elucidated; and that being done, nothing would remain but to perfect a system proved to be faulty. We have learned dogs, and learned pigs; that cows are not incapable of extraordinary feats is proved by the one that jumped over the moon. Let us educate our cows; let us teach them to milk themselves in the strict privacy of their habitations, a sturdy short-horn keeping sentry at the cow-house door to prevent any dishonest creature on two legs from entering; let the sagacious animals be further provided with a little fire and

some sealing-wax, with which the lids of the full pails may be secured and stamped with a hoof, no other brand being genuine. There may be a few obstacles in the way of successfully carrying out this idea; but, as it is very unlikely that we shall ever get pure milk until we do, it should be an incentive to patient trial.

Until that excellent newspaper, the 'Milk Journal,' came into existence, nearly two years since, although a certain amount of uneasiness prevailed amongst us as to the quality of the fluid that was supplied us under the name of milk, little that was reliable was known on the subject. Now, however, thanks to the invaluable researches of the journal in question, our eyes are completely opened to the extent to which we have been the victims of the milkman. The only consolation to be derived from the careful analysis of hundreds of milk samples—obtained from vendors in all parts of London, and always without their knowing the purpose for which the said samples were obtained—is this: in his rapacity for profit the milkman stops short of poisoning us. 'The result of our examinations,' says the experienced chemist to whom this department of the Milk Journal's wholesome work is entrusted, 'is quite decisive against the occurrence of any kind of mineral adulteration. Not one of sixty samples was adulterated in the smallest degree with salt, or chalk, or mineral matter of any description;' but, on the other hand, the extent to which the frauds of putting off skimmed milk for pure, and of adding water to the article, is almost incredible. We are told that genuine milk should yield ten per cent. of its bulk in the shape of cream, and twelve per cent.—a little more or less—of solid matter, when the

milk is dried at 212° Fah. The very first investigations of the analyst, however, led to some curious discoveries. With a few honourable exceptions (duly recorded and perpetuated in the pages of the journal), it was found that a system of roguery prevailed throughout the trade, affecting the Milk Company no less than the humble back-street milk-shop keeper. It was proved that an association in a large way of business, holding a contract to supply genuine milk for the use of the paupers of Holborn Union, improved their bargain by robbing the milk of seven-tenths of its cream, and adding water at the rate of nearly a quart to the gallon. But the company supplying the Shoreditch paupers cut it finer even than this. An analysis of this precious mixture disclosed the fact that it was diluted to an extent that made it inferior to 'half-and-half.' That is to say, if these robbers of a pauper child's bread-and-milk basin had been content with adding a gallon of water to a gallon of milk, the result of analysis would have shown cream 5 per cent., solids 6 per cent.; whereas the figures appear, cream 4 per cent., solids 5.48 per cent. It has been ascertained that the metropolitan workhouses and unions pay annually the sum of 15,000*l.* for milk; therefore, taking the stuff supplied to Holborn Union as a fair average sample, metropolitan rate-payers have to pay 5000*l.* a year for water supplied by enterprising contractors, at the rate of about three-pence a quart. It may be some satisfaction to paupers, however, to be informed that it is not only of folk of their mean estate that the milk-purveyor takes advantage. The Black List published in the 'Milk Journal' contains the names of those whose 'walk' is restricted to the aristocratic regions of May-

fair and Belgravia. Even Royalty itself is not exempt from the machinations of the dishonest dairyman. A purveyor to the Queen figures in the shameful list, and the result of two analyses shows that the royal milk-jug was 'Simpsonized' one day to the extent of 15 per cent; and a few days after, to the extent of 12 per cent.

There are neighbourhoods—whole districts, of miles in extent—where genuine milk is an article not to be obtained. According to the 'Milk Journal,' the parish of Islington may claim this distinction. In one month it obtained from fifty milk-sellers, great and small, samples of the article in question, and in *not one* instance was it possible to return a favourable report. Some of the fifty were less roguish than others; but all were rogues. Much of the stuff that was tested contained no cream at all; other yielded four, three, two, *one* per cent., instead of ten, while as regards the quantity of water added, it is curious, on glancing down the long list, to note each vendor's strict adherence to his dishonest system. In every case two samples were procured from each shop, the one a week or ten days after the other; but the difference exhibited is, in most cases, very slight. Twenty per cent. of water seems to be the average amount of adulteration, varying scarcely the turn of a pump-handle in a painful.

Apropos of the eccentricities of the milk trade in the parish of Islington may be related a fact not generally known. Twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays, which are market-days, there may be seen in the streets in the vicinity of the Metropolitan Cattle Market, in Caledonian Road, vendors of milk, who differ in appearance very remarkably from the orthodox milk-man and woman.



Drawn by E. Richardson

THE MILKWOMAN

milk is dried at 212° Fah. The very first investigations of the analyst, however, led to some serious discoveries. With a few honourable exceptions (fully recorded and perpetuated in the pages of the journal), it was found that a system of rogues prevailed throughout the trade, affecting the Milk Company no less than the humble back-street milk-shop-keeper. It was proved that an association in a large way of business, holding a contract to supply genuine milk for the use of the poor of Holborn Union, augmented their bargain by adding the milk of seven-fifths of its cream, and adding water at the rate of nearly a quart to the gallon. But the company supplying the St. Pancras paupers cut it finer even than this. An analysis of this precious mixture disclosed the fact that it was diluted to an extent that made it inferior to 'half-and-half.' That is to say, if these robbers of a pauper child's breast-and-milk tain had been content with adding a gallon of water to a gallon of milk, the result of analysis would have shown cream 5 per cent., solids 6 per cent.; whereas the figures appear, cream 4 per cent., solids 5.48 per cent. It has been ascertained that the metropolitan work-houses and unions pay annually the sum of 15,000*l.* for milk; therefore, taking the stuff supplied to Holborn Union as a fair average sample, metropolitan rate-payers have to pay 5000*l.* a year for water supplied by enterprising contractors, at the rate of about three-pence a quart. It may be some satisfaction to paupers, however, to be informed that it is not only of folk of their mean estate that the milk-purveyor takes advantage. The Black List published in the 'Milk Journal' contains the names of those whose 'walk' is restricted to the aristocratic regions of May-

fair and Belgravia. Even royalty itself is not exempt from the contamination of the dishonest dairyman. A purveyor to the Queen figures in the shameful list, and the result of two analyses shows that the royal milk-jug was 'Simpsonised' one day to the extent of 14 per cent; and a few days after, to the extent of 12 per cent.

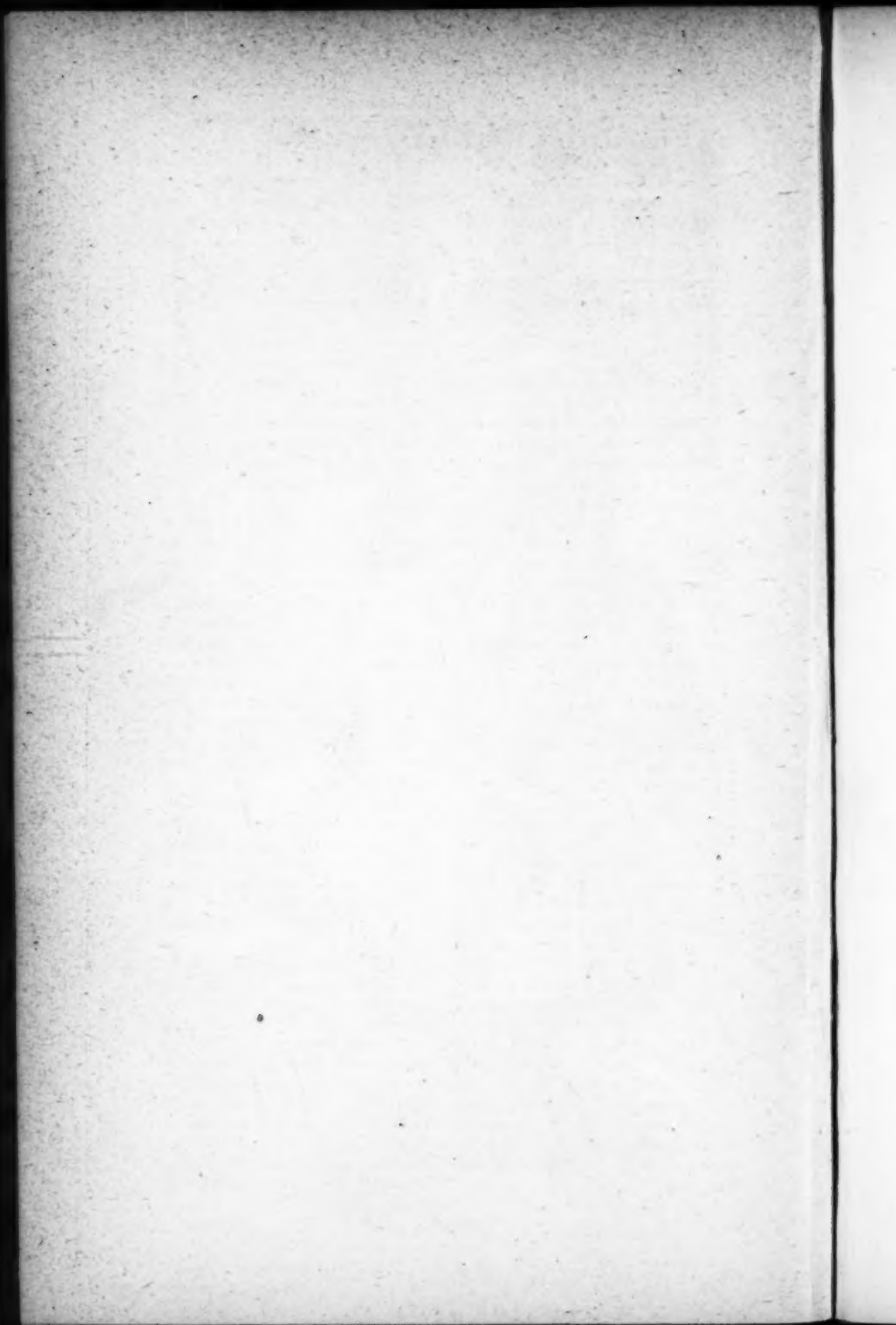
There are neighbourhoods—whole districts, of miles in extent—where genuine milk is an article not to be obtained. According to the 'Milk Journal,' the parish of Islington may claim this distinction. In one month it obtained some fifty milk-sellers, great and small, samples of the article in question, and in not one instance was it possible to return a favourable report. Some of the fifty were less roguish than others; but all were rogues. Much of the stuff that was bought contained no cream at all; some contained less than two, one per cent. (some of one), while as regards the quantity of water added, it is curious, on glancing down the long list, to note each vendor's strict adherence to his dishonest system. In every case two samples were procured from each shop, the one a week or ten days after the other; but the difference exhibited is, in most cases, very slight. Twenty per cent. of water seems to be the average amount of adulteration, varying scarcely the turn of a pump-handle in a painful.

A propos of the concentration of the milk trade in the parish of Islington may be added a fact not generally known. Twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays, which are market-days there may be seen in the streets in the vicinity of the Metropolitan Cattle Market, in Caledonian Road, vendors of milk, who differ in appearance very remarkably from the orthodox milk-man and woman.



Drawn by E. Buckman.

THE MILKWOMAN.



The Islington market-day milkman is a person who is not very suggestive either of sweet breath of cows or the delights of the teatable. On the contrary, his voice, his manner, his attire, are more significant of the urging on of savage dogs to bite and worry the hocks and haunches of distracted bullocks, and of the aiding their efforts of torture, by means of a stout ash-stick tipped with a steel prod. Nor is it at all wonderful that it should be so, since, by profession, the man is what his battered hat, his mud-bespattered boots and leggings, his ochrestained fustian coat bespeak him—a drover. It is only on Mondays and Thursdays that he appears in the comparatively mild and pacific character of a milkman. He does not, however, conform to the rules and usages of the craft. He is burthened with no 'yoke,' and he eschews the bright and decent can. In place of the last mentioned he carries a commonplace wooden pail, borrowed, probably, from the waterman at the nearest cab-stand, and for a measure he has a public-house pewter pint pot. He affects no musical cry. What he has to sell he advertises with the voice of a costermonger, setting down his pail in the mud, the more conveniently to make a speaking-trumpet of his hands, to assist his roaring. 'Hoy, hoy!' he bellows, 'here yer har! Fresh drawn, fresh drawn, and on'y tup'pence a quart. Come and 'ave it gin-u-wine!' That it is milk from the cow there can be no doubt, for, as well as 'fresh drawn,' it is unstrained, and the liquid in the pail bears on its surface numerous specimens of the hair of the quadruped that yielded it. It is fresh enough, this milk, and probably, since it cost the vendor nothing, it may be unadulterated. Why,

then, is it so cheap? Why is it sold at the rate of twopence a quart, when the regular dealer in the article is demanding, and obtaining, fourpence or fivepence for the same quantity? In the first place, good reader, and as above hinted, these drovers-turned-milkmen are not called on to buy what they sell. It is their 'perquisite.' It should be understood that of the four or five thousand beasts exhibited in the market for sale, a very considerable number are cows 'in milk.' Now a cow so conditioned, if over-driven and worried, is apt to grow restless and feverish, and to suffer in appearance consequently.

The butcher coming to the market to buy may wish to 'kill' that same night; and he is far too knowing a man of business to attempt to convert into beef an animal whose blood is unhealthily excited. These are the creatures on which the drovers are permitted to operate; pushing amongst the poor beasts huddled in their pens, pail in hand, and with a keen eye for a laden udder, and milking a little here and a little there until their vessel is full.

The obtaining of genuine milk by the ordinary means of pressure is all the more hopeless, because those who deal in it seem utterly lost to all sense of shame as regards its adulteration. We are commonly informed that, for an extra penny a quart, we may 'send, or come and see our milk drawn from the cow.' This can only mean one thing, and that is, *not* that Mr. Cowkeeper regards a visit to his cow-house during milking-time worth a penny as an instructive and interesting exhibition, but that he wishes to be secured against the penny loss he shall sustain if you prevent him, by your presence at the time of purchase, from withdrawing from

your quart of milk to the extent of twenty-five per cent., and substituting water.

The most mysterious part of the business is to understand what becomes of all the milk yielded by the cows of Great Britain. There was a time when a great deal of it was converted into butter; but, if we may believe all that we hear and read, modern invention has caused the use of milk to be almost entirely superseded in the production of that article of domestic consumption; the chief ingredient used in the manufacture of the composition provided for spreading on bread being imported from Russia and Australia, in enormous hogaheds, exactly like those one occasionally sees at the door of the tallow-chandler, with hog-lard, and salt, and certain flavourings and coloured matter, of a secret nature, and doubtless as valuable to the manufacturer as are certain mysterious dyes to the makers of cotton and woollen goods. In the good old times, again, milk was not uncommonly used to make cheese; but, judging from the enormous difficulty experienced by the housekeeper in procuring a single pound of either Cheshire, Cheddar, or Gloucester, single or double, that is fit to be eaten, it would seem like a libel on cow creation to attempt to account for the dearth of milk in this direction. Every London milk-purveyor, of whom you may ask the question, is ready with his answer. It is rinderpest that causes the scarcity: it is foot and mouth disease: it is the failure of last year's root crops, and the pernicious use of oilcake as cattle food! But I think that the most ingenious theory was that propounded by our own milkman.

We never suspected him, the villain! For years has he replenished our milk-jug. He keeps cows of his own, and has a meadow

at the rear of his premises in which, when off duty, the horned creatures disport. It would be impossible to imagine a more genuine-looking milkman: ruddy-faced, farmerish—even to farmyard boots and a sage-green smock frock—it seemed as though, even if he tried to 'doctor' his milk, he would, in his innocence of the ways of roguery, make such a hash of it that he would never attempt the trick again. It was more with a view to strengthen our high opinion of Mr. Brooks' character—if that were possible—than from any suspicion we entertained of his integrity, that we procured a lactometer and, one fine morning, plunged it into a measure of Brooks' milk, so 'new,' as to be positively warm. Judge, then, of our amazement when, without the least hesitation, the faithful instrument pronounced Brooks a cheat! It seemed impossible. The lactometer we had known but a few hours: Brooks we had known for years. The former must be in error. To be quite sure, we carried it to our friend the chemist. No. The lactometer was correct!

When Brooks called that afternoon, to his astonishment he was asked to cross the threshold and walk into the parlour. From his manner of passing the cuff of his innocent sage-green frock across his lips, as he reverently rubbed holes in our door-mat with his nobnailed boots, my impression is, that Mr. Brooks entertained the pleasing idea that he was about to be invited to partake of a liquid that was somewhat more exhilarating than milk. When, however, he caught sight of the lactometer, his countenance changed instantly. He did not wait to be accused. The milk was 'dashed' a little—he admitted it. 'But it wasn't done out of dishonesty,' protested Brooks the bold;

'no man as knows me can accuse me of that. The fact is, sir, there isn't enough milk to be had, and we are 'bliged to eke it out, and make it go as far as possible.'

'But how do you account for the scarcity?'

'Well now,' returned our milkman, 'that's a puzzler to a good many, but I've worked it out as clear as——'

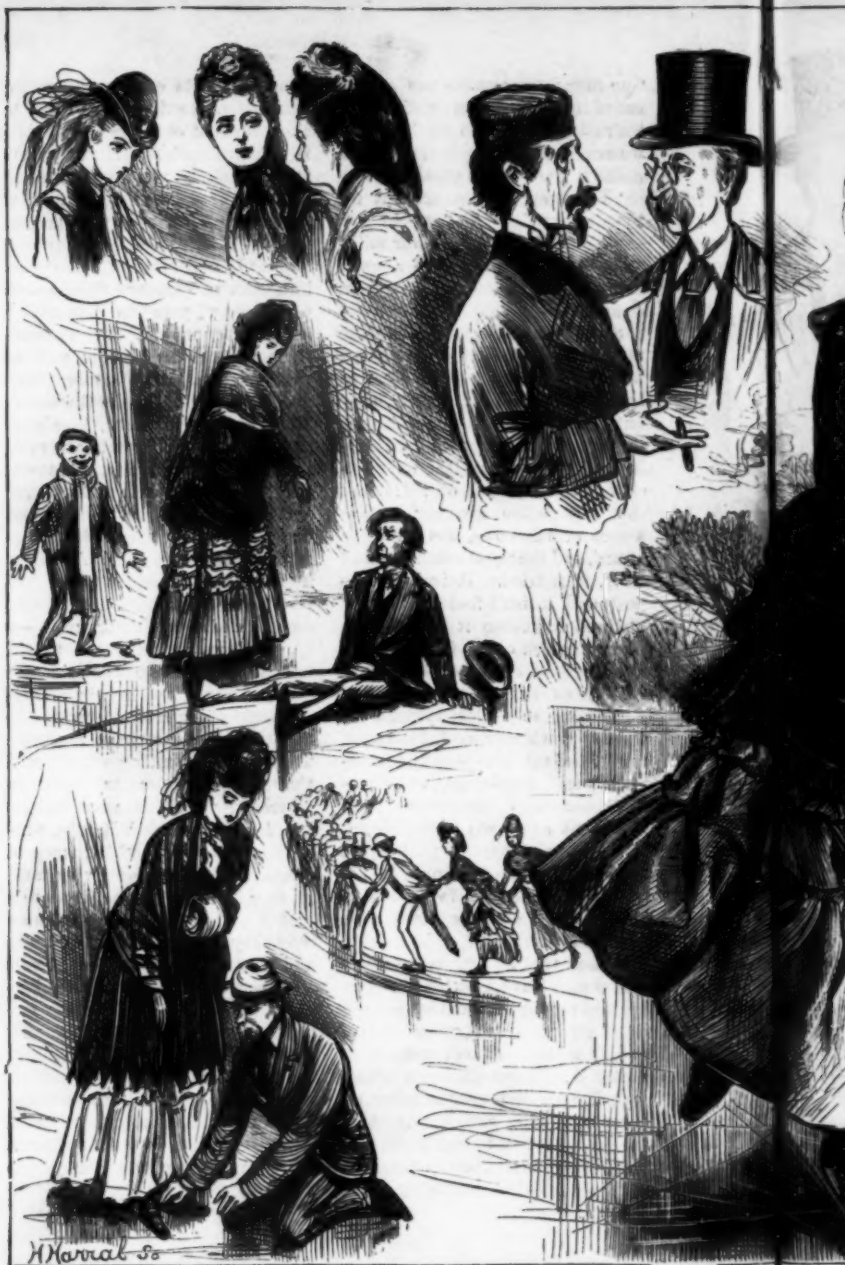
Seeing that Brooks was at the moment at a loss for a simile, I was about to suggest, 'as clear as fraud detected by a lactometer;' but, possibly suspecting my design, he hastened to complete his halting sentence—'as clear as crish'll I can make it out. It isn't the poperlation growing in advance of the cows, 'cos natur' is natur', and the poperlation couldn't do it, if it tried. It isn't rinderpest, and it isn't foot and mouth disease. Likewise it isn't shortness of green crops for food; it's the hincrase of factories.'

And as Brooks disclosed the mysterious secret he lowered his voice to a whisper, and, I thought, cast a defiant glance at the lactometer, still floating in the milk—the inexorable instrument that had dealt so hardly with him, as though to challenge it to disprove the genuineness of his opinion.

'The increase of factories?' I repeated, not a little amazed at his communication. 'I should have supposed that an increase of factories would have ensured an augmented supply, rather than——'

'But you don't quite understand me, sir. I don't mean milk factories: I mean factories where weaving and spinning is going on—cotton mills, and that sort of thing. It's the feedin' bottles of Lancashire, and Manchester, and Nottingham that is draining the

country of its cows' milk,' continued Brooks, evidently desiring to show himself obliging and affable, if not strictly honest. 'It stands to sense, sir, if you come to think of it. I've got a friend who is a foreman at one of the largest babies'-feedin'-bottle dealer's in England, and he tells me that hundreds of crates of these goods goes every year to Lancashire alone; and why is it? Because there the women work as well as the men; and, what is more, they go out to work. That's the thing. They go out to work, hundreds and thousands of these mothers of families, and, as a matter o' course, they can't take their babies with 'em. They leave 'em at home, poor little creaters, to console themselves with the feedin'-bottle. That's how the milk goes. It stands to reason. Poor people don't go in much for milk—a hap'orth is as much as they'll take for the whole family's tea; but you can't keep a baby's feedin'-bottle going from morning till night under a couple of pen'orth. That's how the milk goes, sir, and that accounts for its being so scarce. And that's what it'll be here,' continued Mr. Brooks, prophetically, 'if we don't keep a sharp look out. It's all very well, this agitation about women's rights, and their wanting to know why they can't follow this trade and that, as men do; but it will be a bad day for those that advocate cheap milk, if ever they get their way. Mothers out at work means babies at home, and falling back on the feedin'-bottle. And up milk will go, in proportion to the demand, until a cow that yields bountiful, will be as valuable almost as a goose that lays golden eggs.'



AS IT WOULD



AS IT SHOULD BE.

UNFINISHED PICTURES.

BY JOSEPH HATTON.

A COACH suddenly pulled up on a country highway; the horses prancing; the driver and his passengers looking after a fox which has recently crossed the road. Two dogs, the first of a pack in full cry, are tearing away, their noses close to the scent, their bodies almost under the coach. In the distance come the huntsmen, making a picturesque group in the autumn landscape. It is a Leeds coach. The driver has an eye to sport. He will not run the risk of spoiling the scent. His shiny-coated cattle rear and plunge at their sudden pull up. They are on a bridge spanning an old water-course, which gives the artist an opportunity of introducing accessories that help the general effect. It is altogether a rare piece of work, full of 'go,' admirable in composition, the horses living, breathing animals, the coach-passengers genuine travellers, the scene English in the broadest sense of the word.

The picture is Ben Herring's. It is unfinished. The horses are not completely harnessed. The driver has no reins. The dogs on the road, like some of Landseer's, are mere outlines. It was the artist's last picture. His hand faltered and fell while he was engaged upon the concluding touches. He died in presence of his own bright autumnal creation. I sat in his little studio a few days ago, and contemplated his work. An infant, born five days before his sudden death, sat crooning and crowing at the painted horses. The autumn wind came moaning through the forest, the forest in which Herring often wandered smoking, thinking,

and catching butterflies. His cottage and studio stand on the borders of Epping Forest not far from Chingford. I looked in, with sympathetic curiosity, to see the artist's work-room.

As a rule there is nothing half so cosy as artists' studios, though their style and fashion are as varied as the works of their owners. A few odd examples may be mentioned. Millais' studio is fitted up with artistic taste and elegance. Few painters are so comfortably provided. To my thinking, a studio should be elegantly and artistically furnished. Millais' soft carpet, his classic vases, the flowing drapery, his pretty little piano, his soft lights, the well balanced colour of his furniture, and his flowers lying carelessly here and there, are apropos in the highest degree. Mr. O'Neil has a severer taste; but the silence of distant fields and forests seems almost to reign in the admirably-constructed work-room in which 'Eastward Ho!' and 'Home Again' grew and astonished the artist's friends. It is easy to understand how the big, dull side of that famous ship would startle the first beholders who had access to O'Neil's studio. They thought their friend mad to fill his foreground with such an ugly mass; but they were silenced when the real homely Englishmen and women began to come down the side, saying farewell to the gallant fellows who presently crowded the deck and looked over the bulwarks at the sorrow-stricken dear ones for whom the old boatman was waiting below. A contrast to both these studios is that of Ben Lender, who has made

his way to the front as a landscape artist. It is surrounded by the country which Leader loves to paint; the middle distance is fine, rich, open meadow land; in the far distance the Malvern hills mount up to the sky in a graceful outline that rivals the sun's own pictures of cloud mountains. Leader's studio is as simple as the most ordinary workshop. There is nothing in it to distract the artist's attention from his work or to relieve the eye when it is weary; but the worker has all kinds of shutters and mechanical contrivances for the management of his lights; and he paints with great facility, working with unflagging earnestness while he is at it. If he wants a change, there is his horse at the door, and a glorious country to ride through, with the old city of Worcester lying down yonder in the valley by the Severn. The finest studio I ever visited—it would hold all those I have mentioned—is Doré's, in Paris. It was planned long before the artist became famous. When there was some doubt about his pictures being hung at the French Academy, he said to his friend Jerrold, 'I will have my own salon; if they wish to see my pictures, they must come there.' Brave words; in them spoke out the conscious soul, the firm will, the true genius. It was akin to Disraeli's prophetic speech, 'The time will come,' &c.

But I am wandering far away from that simple little studio in the cottage garden by the forest, with its unfinished pictures, and its strange, sad silence. Ben Herring was a simple-minded, gentle, homely man, with few wants and almost childish pleasures. His studio, a square wooden building, contained not only his works, but his chief amusements. With an infinite amount of labour and ingenuity he constructed round three

parts of the room, on a thick shelving, breast high, a railway. He had a panorama of open country, fields, woods, towns, villages, bridges, at the back of it. Engines, carriages, points, model station-houses, all were his own manufacture. He had ordinary passenger trains, luggage trains, mail trains. They made regular journeys; they were timed; they were shunted; they were subject to points; they came and went with due regularity. The artist worked them by a sort of spindle and cord; and during the intervals of work it was his delight to sit and smoke and watch the trains. His little ones climbed his knees and went into ecstasies at the sight; and his neighbours often came in to share in their amusement. At one point of the line he constructed a tin bridge, almost for the sake of the rattle of the trains. He had a heavy truck laden with an iron screw-nut, and now and then, after an operation of shunting, he would leave it on the line where the mail train would shortly pass. Presently the fast train would come rattling along over the metal bridge, and then rush pell-mell into the luggage truck, causing a terrible accident, at which Herring and his friends would laugh heartily, as they picked up the wooden passengers, readjusted the train, and cleared the track for coming traffic. It is not a little curious that an artist who loved horses, and painted them as if he loved them, should have found so much delight in a toy railway. The pleasures and amusements of men of genius would make an interesting book. I commend the subject to some apt and thoughtful compiler. The name of Ben Herring is worthy of being classed with men of genius; had he lived he would have made a far higher name than that of his father. But as to his amusements,

there lies in his studio another reminiscence of them, in a little cabinet of insects and butterflies. He knew almost every kind of moth in the forest.

‘Brindle moth and Golden Spot,
Bramble moth, Buff Tip, and Dot,
Mottled, Willow, Peach and Pearl,
With dusty stripe and crimson curl,
Silk and satin, brown and red,
Burnished brass and Devil’s-head.’

He knew them every one, and wandered after them everywhere. As a collector he was humane and gentle; he killed his specimens with chloroform on the instant of capture. In the centre of his studio he had a small billiard-table, the *fac-simile* almost of one that stands in Leader’s work-room. Now and then he would play a game with an imaginary opponent, who sometimes ran him very hard and occasionally beat him.

Ben Herring’s studio remains almost as he left it. The trains; the moths; the billiard-table; the paragraph about his father drawing the three heads on the back of a cheque at the Bank of England stuck on the wall; two or three unfinished pictures here and there; an exquisite little finished painting of a stag’s head—a memorial of the last stag killed in the forest; a fishing rod; a few old pipes; some ‘Gentleman’s Magazines;’ a modelled head or two of horses; the familiar easel, the palette, a few tubes of colour. One of the unfinished pictures is ‘Going to the Horse Fair.’ The original of this was painted on commission for a print publisher, who gave him 500*l.* for it. The one now on the wall was being painted for the engraver. But the printseller failed; and, somehow or another, a mistake was made by an auctioneer, and the original was bought by an American for a nominal sum, and taken to the States.

Another unfinished picture worth mentioning is ‘The Retired Actress.’ It is an interior of a country stable, in which stands a white mare, once a favourite of the circus, with a foal reclining at her feet. A couple of pigeons are perched on a tub, and some poultry are picking up a living among the straw. The top half of the stable-door is open, showing a pleasant bit of landscape. His latest finished picture has been sent to the Manchester Exhibition. It is called ‘Green Sleeves leads,’ and is a breezy bit of steeple-chasing. Everybody who takes an interest in our national sports, knows this artist’s famous pair of pictures, ‘Silks and Satins of the Turf,’ and ‘Silks and Satins of the Field.’ The publisher of these cleared 4000*l.* by his purchase. The coloured copies are now among the most favourite of sporting prints. Herring used to receive a guinea each for signing the artist’s proofs, and he made a considerable sum of money in this way.

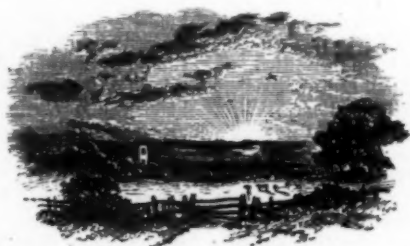
Among the sketches in the dead artist’s studio is one by Charles Herring; it is a harvest scene, roughed out on a sheet of brown paper, and shows the touch of a master hand. Charles Herring died young, and unknown. He assisted his father in the palmy days of that famous author of ‘The Frugal Meal.’ J.F. Herring, the father of Ben and Charles, was a self-made man. He was a native of Doncaster. As a boy he was fond of painting; but he did not commence real art work until late in life. His rise was almost the result of accident. One day, sitting next the driver of a coach whose horses were giving him very serious trouble, Herring got permission from the whip to take the reins; whereupon he at once proved himself to be quite an accomplished coachman; and this led to his

taking an engagement in that capacity. While tooling his coach one day, he pointed out to a passenger some of the beauties of the country, in such artistically technical language that the passenger discovered his predilection for painting. The passenger proved to be not only a lover of art, but—what was more to the purpose just then—a man of money, and he gave Herring the means of prosecuting his studies. The result is well known. He painted nearly all her Majesty's favourite horses; he left behind him works that will live for ages; for years he filled the position of a country gentleman, living among his hunters and his dogs at Tunbridge Wells. He married a second time, late in life, and his widow is still living. There is only one son now living, the two who especially inherited his genius being Charles and Ben. The former died at the age of thirty, the latter at forty. These sons worked hard in company with their father, and on some of his best pictures; Charles at an early age giving the very highest promise of

future power. It is a rare thing to see children inheriting a father's genius. The Herrings are, however, remarkable examples of transmitted genius. Ben Herring had no equal in those days as a painter of the horse, whose anatomy was to him an open book, every line of which he knew by heart. A sister of poor Ben's is married to Harrison Weir, who, in another walk of animal painting, has made a lasting name in art.

Ben Herring died a few years too early both for fame and fortune. If there is anything in infantile manifestations of genius, his youngest child will some day be heard of in the art-world. I left it still crooning and crowing at that unfinished picture of the coach and horses; and, passing through the garden, my eyes rested upon a pinky clump of rose leaves which had fallen before the first frost of the autumn.

‘Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the North wind's
breath,
And stars to set;—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O
Death!’



THE ROMANCE OF MEDICINE.

IN once more gathering up the threads of this subject from other years, and endeavouring to address a lay audience from a laic point of view, one would naturally desire, according to the limited measure of one's ability, to grasp some medical subject for which we all have an affinity, and which may be of usefulness to some. But in these papers I enter into an implied bargain with my readers to tell them something picturesque and odd—something that may even be romantic and sensational: but I am also troubled with the uneasy idea that I might ventilate some matters that might be for the health and happiness of some of us. I am like some honest citizen who has only got some modest extent of garden-plot, which he feels bound to lay out with flowers, but at the same time he has some yearnings towards homely but esculent vegetables; or, to vary the simile, just as mathematicians have their pure and applied mathematics, so, in discussing questions of medical life and science, one desires not only to look at the subject on its abstract and literary side, but to aim at some concrete good. I will propose, *lector benevole*, that we attempt a compromise; that whilst in random, discursive talk I am permitted, as heretofore, to cull some anecdotes, thoughts and illustrations, such as outsiders may care to gather from a particular science, I may yet dwell on matters that may be of essential home interest to us, and hope there may be a somewhat serious design and meaning underlying our *olla podrida*.

In Medicine, the first object of interest and attention is the medical man himself. An author is to me something more interesting

than anything he does in authorship; a great classic's works are only the fossil remains of a vanished world of intelligence. When patients ponder on pills and potions, I the rather wonder why they do not examine into the nature and idiosyncrasy of their medical man. They may depend upon it that, if he is worth much, he will be examining into *their* nature and idiosyncrasy. The great question for the patient to solve is, whether his doctor has got the mystic gift. He may be chuckful of science; tap him anywhere, and there will be a clear-running stream of fact and comment; but the practical question is, whether he will prove a healer to me. High science may leave a man very stupid for practice. The knowledge of things is but an adjunct to the knowledge of ends. The physician aware, in the first instance, of all the dangers his patient is liable to, should, then, from his own knowledge, select the best means of obviating them; but, though he had the whole *materia medica* by heart, he would not be nearer his mark, if he knew nothing of disease; and this is essentially the full-gotten knowledge of good and evil impressed on him through a susceptibility of his mind altogether distinct from the acquisition of natural history and chemistry. To remember well the pains and the moments of relief of all the sufferers he has witnessed is the first requisite of a physician; to couple these with their attendant circumstances and to store them up too, is a farther extension of the practical intelligence. On this foundation he ought to build a store of nature-knowledge, of book-knowledge, and of logical acumen. As a man,

prudent for himself, should remember adequately all his own pains, so a man skilfully prudent for the sick, should remember all their pains and weaknesses in the first instance; his head should be more full of misery than the box of Pandora, and his only solace should be the hope at the bottom. This is a wise set of sentences, which I have found stored up among my medical notes and reflections, and, I believe, goes pretty deep into the heart of things medical.

If a medical man shows at great advantage in your home or in his own, there is one place in which he is too often uncomfortable, and makes other people uncomfortable as well. This is the witness-box. There is hardly any great trial for murder, but doctors and counsel come into fierce collision; there is the conflict of medical testimony, and the common sense of judge and jury is frequently insulted. It would be a golden rule for a medical man never to use a scientific term if a popular term would serve his use as well. The medical man not only states facts, but obtrudes his explanations and theories about them, and does so in highly technical language. The legal mind revolts against the assumption of the medical mind, and in this way much prejudice is done to science. The lawyers are pretty unanimous in holding that a medical man is the worst possible witness. He cannot plead privilege, like the lawyer or the confessor, and his best plan is to tell his story at once in the most intelligible and straightforward way that he can. The eminent German physician, Caspar, who for many years was forensic physician to the Berlin judiciary courts, is very severe upon medical witnesses: 'How often have I heard physicians talking to the judge and jury of

"excited sensibility," "reflex movements," "coma," "idiopathic," &c., without for one minute considering that they were using words and expressions wholly unintelligible to unprofessional parties!' Caspar's work is a perfect Thesaurus of odd incidents and cases; and if read, it ought to be compared with Taylor's 'Medical Jurisprudence,' that we may compare the difference between the English and Prussian systems. The Prussian plan of having an accredited medical officer attached to a court, who in some sort of way is a minister of justice, is certainly an improvement on a scene not infrequently witnessed in English courts, where a criminal trial is turned into an arena for the conflict of scientific testimony.

If you take the volumes of Caspar, and Professor Taylor's book, and throw in a little more sparkling literature, like 'Christison on Poisons'—Christison, like the Fat Boy, will make your flesh creep—you will have the materials—a veritable huge quarry—out of which you may hammer all kinds of sensational and romantic stories. You may read up the Murderers, just as old Boffin read up the misers. There is the eccentric Miss Blandy, of Oxfordshire, who poisoned her father as a means for promoting her matrimonial projects; the highly luxurious and wealthy people who have tried to poison, not with vulgar lead and arsenic, but with silver and gold; the aberrant wife who poured poison down her husband's open mouth, as he was sleeping. Then there are cases where a three-volume plot might easily be elaborated—where a man, or woman, has actually taken poison, and secreted poison about the effects of an innocent person, that suspicion and punishment might be directed towards the innocent

person. These are cases out of Christison. That learned professor gives a word of caution against a practice that has received considerable laudation. Some preparation of antimony 'is often foolishly used, in the way of amusement, to cause sickness and purging, and likewise to detect servants who are suspected of making free with their mistress's tea-box or whisky-bottle; and in both of these ways alarming effects have sometimes been produced.' It is curious to see the race between sin and science: how the tests of the chemist even more than keep up with the craft of the murderer. Some of our most celebrated poisons are of comparatively recent date. Prussic acid was discovered, not so very many years ago, by Scheele—though poisoning by cherry-laurel was a well-known process; and the late Mr. Palmer, of Rugeley, first brought strychnine into such felonious popularity. The toxicologists can count up their martyrs to science. It is curious to observe how each advancing wave of time blots out the records of crime. The crime that was a national event becomes a tradition—is lost in a black abyss of forgetfulness. There, so far as we are concerned, let such traditions rest.

We come back, however, to the point of departure from whence we digressed. The culture of the medical man is also combined with a very large experience of life in its broadest bearings and its intensest moments. The education, instead of being confined to a single school, has very commonly been carried on at several great medical centres. Travel is more than ever becoming one of the marks of a highly-trained medical man. There is a period of leisure for nearly every medical man which, rightly used, may be one of unspeakable preciousness and im-

portance for him. This is the time that lies between the call to a profession and the obtaining any large share of work. As a rule, all preparatory studies have not done more than to break up the ground and prepare it for the fertilizing process. The real work is to be done when the mind is released from tutors and governors and can concentrate itself on the thought and work of maturer years. Travel is the opportunity that best enables a man to combine study, thought, and observation. It is astonishing what a large and increasing space is occupied in medical life by travel. It is now not at all uncommon for English medical students to spend a great deal of time at the medical schools of Paris and Vienna. They generally prefer Paris to Vienna, and London to either. The best medical men more than ever seem to be familiarized with the scientific medical thought of Germany. The custom of going out as medical officer to vessels is very largely on the increase. Many young men go with the steamers that traverse the regular ocean thoroughfares. Men who have risen to, or descended from, eminence have been glad to take positions on the great lines of steamers. They are found a most agreeable addition to all the social arrangements—with the drawback, however, of being obliged to subsist in a chronic state of flirtation. Others take longer voyages, and, generally speaking, seek a more adventurous line of life. Thus there are, among men I have known, those who have gone to the Greenland seas, round Cape Horn, to Australia, to India, and the Pacific islands, and have gone again and again, induced by the divine passion for knowledge and travel. There would be many competitors for the place of medical officer to travel with some of the

expeditions that now-a-days go round the world. What such travel might be can be seen, with admiring despair, in Darwin's 'Voyage of the Beagle.' Then many people, when they travel, are neither easy or happy unless they can afford the luxury of a 'medical attendant.' Some of the best specimens of medical literature that we have, are due to this interesting class of medical men. A Milor on his travels likes a parson, a doctor, and a traveller's major-domo; but the doctor is least easily dispensed with. In this way, by the medical education abroad, by travelling engagements, and by taking appointments on board ship, we have a travelled class of medical men who represent perhaps the most interesting, and certainly the most amusing, section of the profession. Wherever in this wide world the medical man goes, he can carry his work with him and his own letter of introduction. The wants which surgery and medicine relieve speak their own vehement, universal language, and stand in need of no interpreter. The lawyer can do no good with his law when once he is out of England. The clergyman must learn the language of the natives, and find his opportunity and his audience. But the medical man speaks the universal language, inasmuch as he answers a universal need. The philosopher and the parson can never be quite sure that they have done any good; the good is so remote and hidden, and it rarely happens that it is ascertained. But the surgeon goes to a man in a state of positive torture, and by a happy bit of carpentering puts him to rights, gives the intense happiness of a sudden cessation from intense pain, and at once earns a thrilling amount of very transitory gratitude. It would be only reciting truisms to speak of the immense generous good they

achieve. The amount of self-denying generosity which a physician can practise, and does, is simply incalculable, and there are indeed few of us who could not easily furnish a collection of instances.

The curiosities of medical life and practice are endless. If we hear very often of medical men doing arduous work for very scanty remuneration, sometimes there is an agreeable obverse of receiving very splendid remuneration for very scanty services. We know of a medical man whose duty it is to take lunch every day at a great castle belonging to a noble lord. The household is immense; and there is just the chance that there may be some case of indisposition demanding attention. He gets some of the best company and best lunches in England, and duly charges a guinea for each attendance. There is a very wealthy man near a great city, who cannot bear to be left for the night. There is a physician of great ability who drives out of town nightly to sleep at his residence; he is consequently debarred evening society, and if he goes out to dinner he has to leave his friends before wine. He has to charge his patient a thousand a year; and, I think, he works hard for his money. Sometimes the services are such that money cannot repay them. A friend of mine, a young medicus, had a standing engagement of four hundred a year to look after the health of an old lady. She required to be inspected three times a day, and make an exhibition of tongue and pulse. What made matters so aggravating was, that she was as strong as a horse, while the doctor was a delicate man. She was so selfish and perverse, that he was obliged to tell her that he would have nothing to do with her case. Similarly, I know the son of a rich man who proposed to pay a cler-

gyman several hundred pounds a year for leave to spend his evenings with him. The parson, however, was obliged to tell his rich friend, that he talked such intolerable twaddle, that he could not accept his company on any terms that could be named. But the oddest of these arrangements is the following. A medical man has been attending a patient several years, and yet he has never seen his patient. The gentleman firmly believes that he has an œsophagus of peculiar construction, and that he is accordingly liable at any moment to be choked. That help may be at hand whenever any sudden emergency may occur, he has a physician in the house night and day. The physician, being human, must needs take his walks abroad, and it becomes necessary to provide a substitute for him two hours a-day. Accordingly a doctor attends daily from twelve to two, fills up his time by disposing of an admirable lunch, and finds the gold and silver coin, in their usual happy combination, neatly put by the side of his plate, in tissue-paper. Up to the present date he has never had the pleasure of exchanging words with his interesting patient.

It is in medical biography, or, rather, medical autobiography, that we must look for our most valuable and authentic instances. Medical literature is not rich in this way; some half-dozen volumes would nearly include the whole. It is to be regretted, indeed, that the best medical men write the least; those who have obtained the highest rank in their profession, and who would have most of science, most of incident to impart. There is all the difference in the world between books that are written to obtain practice and books that are written out of the fulness of practice. . . . In medical autobiography we have such

charming narratives as those written by Sir Benjamin Brodie and Sir Henry Holland. There is no doubt that even fictitious narratives, such as 'Early Struggles,' in the 'Diary of a Late Physician,' really give us facts substantially as true as any which we find in regular memoirs. I myself know physicians of singular learning and ability, who for half a dozen years have not taken half a dozen guineas a year. Other men, by the happy use of dress and address, though inferior, leave them far behind. One instance is on record which might well be worked up into some narrative like Mr. Warren's. An able man waited and waited hopelessly till ruin stared him in the face. One night, when brooding on his miseries, he heard a bell ringing violently at his surgery door. Opening it, he found that a man had been thrown out of his cab and nearly killed, and they wanted to bring him into the surgery. The medical man found that there was concussion of the brain and dislocation of the shoulder-joint. His card-case showed that he was a man of birth and a well-known politician. He stopped some time at the surgeon's house, who was thus enabled to lay the foundation of a large and lucrative connection.

Dr. Denman, the father of the great Lord Chief Justice, and the grandfather of our new judge, who has so worthily been promoted to the bench, which he will adorn, prefixed an autobiographical narrative to his 'Introduction to the Practice of Midwifery.' He was educated at the Free School at Bakewell, and, going up to London to study at St. George's Hospital, he boarded and lodged with a hair-dresser at half-a-guinea a week. In six months his money was gone, and he thought, as a desperate chance, he might get a

surgeon's appointment on a King's ship. To his great astonishment, he passed, but he had to pawn his watch before he could join his ship. Once he tried to set up a practice, but he was obliged to betake himself to the royal navy again. However, he tried again. 'I had taken a small house in Oxendon Street; but I furnished only one parlour, thinking to complete it gradually as I was able, and I hired a maidservant, who cheated me very much. When I went into this house, excepting my furniture, I had but twenty-four shillings in the world, but I was out of debt.' He got on gradually, made a very happy marriage, bought houses, bought land, kept his coach, and, what, as a Bakewell man, pleased him immensely, he was called in to attend the Duchess of Devonshire. 'I was made happy,' he writes, 'by the birth of a son, which was an unexpected blessing, as I had given up all hopes of having any more children.' This son was the celebrated Lord Chief Justice. In time, Dr. Denman became the head of his profession.

Many similar instances might be supplied. Even John Hunter had to make his way amid the greatest difficulties, having to satisfy his brother William of his genius before he could satisfy the outside world. Sir James Simpson is another instance of a man who might have taken *nitor in adversum* as his motto. He was one of the poorest of poor students who flock to a Scottish university. There is a pretty little village called Inverkip on the Frith of Clyde, near which is Sir Michael Shaw Stewart's great place. He applied for the office of village surgeon, but, not having any local influence, the appointment was refused him. Sir James used to say that he felt a deeper amount of chagrin and

disappointment from this circumstance than from any other event in his life. Going before a famous pathologist for examination, the examiner was so pleased with him that he asked him to become his assistant. When Simpson became a candidate for the Chair of Midwifery at Edinburgh, the great local interests were again enlisted against him. It was alleged that his election would be prejudicial to the interests of hotel-keepers and city tradesmen, for it was not likely that many strangers would be induced to visit Edinburgh for the purpose of getting professional advice. It was not for the first time that the highest intellectual interests had been imperilled at Edinburgh by such petty considerations. As a matter of fact, no physician ever attracted such a number of visitors; the invalids came in shoals. Simpson once told his pupils that many of his best papers were written by the bedsides of his patients. His great principle, when he met with any apparently hopeless case, was to interrogate what nature did in the rare instances in which she effected cures. Simpson's great discoveries may be here enumerated; they form the most thrilling page of modern medical history. His first great achievement was that he procured chloroform undiluted, and discovered the effects of the vapour. This great discovery alone would suffice to associate his name with that of Harvey. That night of the 28th of November, 1847, is much to be remembered, when this great discovery was made. He then demonstrated the possibility of banishing pain and subjecting it to human control. There are now a great many manufactories of chloroform in Edinburgh alone—one that makes several million doses a year. His great surgical invention is acu-

pressure—stopping blood from cut arteries by the use of metallic needles. His third great achievement was his contributions to that great work in which Dr. William Budd has pre-eminently laboured. This is to endeavour to stamp out contagious diseases as completely as the poleaxe could exterminate the rinderpest. His last great work was in the direction of hospital reform. How was it, he asked, that, in the hospital, the mortality in cases of amputation was one in thirty, and elsewhere one in 180. Hospitalism has its special evils, that are fatal in these palaces of human suffering. Sir James Simpson's final suggestion goes to the root of the matter—that all staircases, etc., should be outside the building, and that no one ward should ever have even the slightest chink of communication with another.

This last reform of Sir James Simpson's is especially important. It is not too much to say that all the great triumphs of surgery, such as those in lithotripsy and ovariectomy, have been practically neutralized by foul hospital air, to which is due one-half of the deaths in our great metropolitan hospitals. In surgical wards there is a condensation of foul air, and, in addition, the specific poisonous effluvia given off by foul air. Mr. Spencer Wells is famous for that wonderful operation by which the lingering agony of years is prevented by the knife being used under anesthetics. He generally uses the new anæsthetic methylene, which, in many cases, is preferable to chloroform. He found that there was a large mortality in hospitals, which was reduced to one-eighth in private practice. St. George's Hospital has now a small institution for ovariectomy at Wimbledon, an example which may be extensively followed. It is to be hoped that

in the magnificent seaside institutions that are so much increasing among us there will be a conspicuous adherence to the principle of the cottage hospital. The National Hospital at Ventnor is constructed on the cottage principle, and we have before had occasion in these pages to testify to its wonderful efficiency.

A case which, some time ago, was tried in the Court of Queen's Bench illustrates, in a striking manner, some of the dangers that belong to the annual national migration to the seaside, and also suggests some very large and important considerations affecting the national health. Without going fully into the details of a peculiarly painful case, it will be sufficient to mention the salient facts. Sea air having been ordered for a child by a medical man after an attack of scarlatina, a lady took her nurse, governess, and children to the coast, and hired apartments without telling the lodging-house keeper of the nature of the illness in her family. After a time this most infectious of all infectious diseases broke out afresh, apparently from the neglect of the proper disinfecting processes, and the poor lady lost two of her children, and the unhappy landlady of the lodging-house also lost two little ones. The anguish of parental grief cannot be measured by a pecuniary standard, but actual medical and funeral expenses, and the injury done to the course of business, are susceptible of being assessed, and the jury gave the lodging-house keeper substantial damages. It is impossible not to feel commiseration for the seaside visitors who experienced this blow in addition to their own calamities, but the verdict was not unwarranted by the facts, nor, to use regretfully a harsh word, undeserved. Those

who are acquainted with the history of special classes among the poor are aware how much deadly illness there has been at times in the families of laundresses and pawnbrokers, who have had under their charge the raiment of fever patients, to which no purifying process had been applied. (Still greater mischief has been done by milk which has been adulterated with water taken from some impure source.) We know, also, of cases where lodgings or furnished houses have been let, in the holiday season of the year, after the occurrence of contagious illness, and yet no disinfectants have been used, and no honest warning has been given. It must increasingly be felt how necessary are some caution and judgment in making holiday arrangements. It is comparatively easy for a lodging-house keeper to recover damages from a well-to-do family in a case where fever has been propagated through a want of care and candour; but, if the converse case had occurred—and it happens in at least an equal degree—it is hardly likely that substantial damages could be obtained from the landlord, even if bereaved fathers, in their grief, should be inclined to seek them. Scarlet fever slays in this country annually some twenty thousand people, and disables, more or less, for a longer or shorter time, a hundred thousand more. Yet, humanly speaking, the larger amount of this mortality might be averted by the processes of disinfection, separation, and, we may add, a religious adherence to truth.

It is not pleasant to think of the successive steps in the history of the sad case to which we have alluded, yet they illustrate the dangers of the travelling public, and might explain the apparently mysterious origin of many a simi-

lar attack. The mischief arose with a convalescent patient going to the seaside. We easily picture him going to the terminus in a London cab, travelling in a public railway carriage, then travelling in another public conveyance, and finally deposited in a public lodging-house. Early convalescence is often a most dangerous period in the disorder, when minute particles from the skin—invisible, impalpable, take wings, and become elements of danger, multiplying seeds of disease and death. It is safer to travel in a carriage with parcels of nitroglycerine than with such a patient. If our national sanitary arrangements were in a satisfactory state such a case would be certified from the London to the local physician, and, both on road and rail, special carriages would be provided, or the ordinary carriages be at once disinfected. Or if, as is usual in this country, such things must be left in private hands, there is a proper treatment which would entirely, or almost entirely, annihilate the danger of contagion. Many of our readers will recollect the piteous case set forth some time back by Dr. Bradley, the present head of University College, when he was head master of Marlborough College. He wanted to know, in the columns of the 'Times,' and various afflicted parents made the same inquiry, when it would be safe for a boy recovering from scarlet fever to return to his home. Scarlatina is almost the one terrible rock ahead which public and private schools have to fear. Many of us know very sad stories of the premature deaths of the young, and the losses and even ruin of schoolmasters through this terrible visitation. It is not every school which has the vitality of Marlborough College to withstand such

trials. In answer to these appeals, the whole theory and practice of disinfection was clearly set forth by competent medical authority. Such obvious methods were suggested as the isolating the patient, the anointing him from head to foot with camphorated olive oil, the destruction or most thorough cleansing of all things infected, the use of entirely untainted clothes; and then we were assured that patients might be restored to society after a very limited quarantine. The natural apprehension would be that these simple means might not prove sufficient; but the real fact is that it is extremely difficult to make people resort even to such simple means as these. Not one hundredth part is found of the energy in preventing disease that is employed in attempting to work its cure. What is wanted is a wider teaching of the elementary principles of such matters, and a greater degree of courage and conscience in applying them.

The fact is, that the prevention of diseases should be more regarded than it is, as a true end and scope of medical science. It is to the credit of medical men that they are more and more devoting their best energies in this direction. The skill of medical diagnosis has been carried to the utmost, but not with the result of any corresponding subjugation of disease. Indeed, it is a humiliating fact, that in those chest cases, where medical science has made the most marvellous discoveries, the actual amount of disease is probably greater than ever it was. The doctors are even quarrelling among themselves, whether certain illnesses are contagious or non-contagious. There is no doubt that scarlatina is contagious; but at the time of the illness of the Prince of Wales, it was sharply

debated whether typhoid fever was infectious or not. Even the fact of such a discussion is hardly creditable, for it might have been thought that scientific men, by a scientific induction of facts, could have set such a question at rest by this time. But we feel quite certain, especially in days when people travel and sojourn away from home, that no case of illness should be found to exist which any opinion entitled to respect should consider infectious, but it should be surrounded with safeguards, and so be saved from becoming the source of those terrible domestic tragedies with which we are all so unhappily familiar.

We have now brought our readers to a point to which we have been working up in the course of this paper, a point of extreme practical importance and urgency, on which the opinions of the public and their suffrages should be collected. We wish to draw more particular attention to a subject which we have just lightly touched on, one which we believe cannot be too much ventilated and discussed among general readers, and on which they are qualified to form an opinion, and to take action upon it. The theory involved is extremely simple and interesting, albeit strictly scientific; but the practical importance of it is enormous. Somewhere in the dim perspective many of us can discern the promise of a golden age, when all curable accidents will be cured, and all preventible diseases will be prevented. There can be no doubt but a simple contagious disease is susceptible of being stamped out. We stamped out the cattle plague, and if the plagues of men touched the same obvious and immediate pecuniary interests as the plagues of cattle, we might stamp out similar calamities among human

beings. To a certain extent the history of the small-pox shows how much can be done this way. In the remarks we are about to make we most especially acknowledge our obligations to Dr. William Budd's writings and teachings on the subject, who has developed his views, full of import to the happiness and well-being of humanity, with immense ability and experience, and much literary skill. The theory is, that any contagious disease can be eradicated; or, at all events, limited within a very slender area; and that various diseases are in reality contagious, such as typhoid fever, and consumption, where the ordinary medical and general mind does not admit the fact of the contagiousness. If we resort to the primitive processes of counting noses, or listening for the largest amount of shouting, we shall decide against the theory; but at present legitimate argument and logical deduction appear to be in its favour.

Mr. Disraeli's policy was lately denounced as a policy of sewage. What has been called by some a policy of sewage has been more properly called by others a question of life and death. We do not mind Mr. Disraeli and his friends having a policy of sewage, but it is essential that the policy should be accurate and enlightened. The advocates of the contagion theory have no weakness for sewage, especially in an olfactory point of view. They say, also, that it places disease under the most favourable conditions for the consummation of its evil mission. But they assert, in opposition to former theories of the Board of Health—that has an unlimited command of print and pay—that sewerage, in itself, does not breed fever and infection, unless it is charged

with specific ingredients of contamination. Infectious diseases are only communicated by the virus of specific poison. Many of us, in the course of the holiday season of the year, accumulate a collection of instances on the subject. In the famous cities of the Continent, and in exquisite Swiss villages, we have the most noisome stinks and sights, yet we hear nothing of fever. In fact, it almost seems a rule that where heaven throws the greatest beauty and magnificence, man should exhibit the greatest abominations. Natural beauty goes, like King Cophetua's beggar-maid, in rags. Clovelly, in Devonshire, is the most romantic spot we know in the western land, and till recently, it was the most undisguisedly dirty. But all through the West of England, and, indeed, we are afraid, all over the three kingdoms, we shall find lovely villages that, despite their loveliness, will give the utmost offence to sight and smell. Yet, for whole decades of years no infectious illness is heard of in these villages; and then, suddenly, fever or small-pox break out, and, to say the least of it, simply decimate the humble inhabitants. The contagionists will assert that the evil state of things was comparatively harmless until charged with a specific virus. One fact bearing on the subject will be fresh in the recollection of all readers. Many years ago, the Thames began to stink horribly in the hot months. The Law Courts broke up, the Houses of Parliament were saturated with chloride of lime, the river steamers lost their traffic, and business men went miles out of their way, in order to avoid crossing a City bridge. 'India is in revolt, and the Thames stinks,' were the two national humiliations bracketed by our severe friend, 'the intelligent

foreigner.' It so happened, also, that a Thames waterman died of the cholera; and that unfortunate waterman created the utmost consternation in the country. A frightful outbreak of cholera and fever was expected. But nothing of the kind happened. The health of the metropolis was remarkably good; the death-rate below the average, especially in the diseases supposed to result from poisonous emanations. There was certainly a failure in the supposed connection between epidemics and a bad sanitary state of things; and the suggestion arises that we were mercifully saved the introduction of some element that might have wrought all the misery we dreaded.

When the Prince of Wales was ill, we all of us, unhappily, acquired some kind of notion on the subject of typhoid fever. Each morning paper became a kind of daily 'Lancet.' It is not much to the credit of the medical profession that there has been a great deal of confusion between typhus and typhoid. The latter, from which our Prince suffered, is totally distinct from typhus, and has its own distinctive marks, as much as small-pox itself. An eminent physician suggests that it should be called the *pythogenetic* fever, which is, however, begging the question at issue, which is the great medical problem of our time, whether this disease is the result of malaria or of contagion. Dr. Budd argues that as it is in typhoid fever, so it is in small-pox; as it is in small-pox, so it is in measles; as it is in measles, so it is in scarlatina; as it is in

scarlatina, so it is in malignant cholera; amid all varying phenomena, *one thing constant, a specific morbid cause*, 'a cause which is neither a permanent product of the soil or air, or of particular seasons, but which is susceptible of transmission from place to place; which breeds as it goes, and then again dies out, or becomes dormant, without leaving any sign to mark its tract.'

The slaughter of the Franco-Germanic war is repeated year by year in England by preventible diseases. This enormous mass of disease furnishes ample material for infection on every side. A most infinitesimal germ, invisible, impalpable, would suffice to infect a single human body, and that body might suffice to infect very many others. It may be said that the link of connection is not always sufficiently clear between the infector and the infectee. In a vast proportion of cases this is clear enough, and it is no argument where it is not. People have been taken ill of small-pox even in prison, under solitary confinement; yet how could we doubt of real, though remote infection. Let each individual do his part in the holy crusade against ignorance and disease. Let it be asked amid contemplated legislation whether the State cannot give effectual hope. We may then hope to transmit to our children their heritage of earth and time less stained by scalding tears and passions of regret, than it has been to us and to our fathers.

FREDERICK ARNOLD.

WILLIE BLAKE'S TRIAL.

BY 'SARCELLE.'

AUTHOR OF 'ONLY A VAGABOND,' 'TWO CRUISES OF THE ROSE,' 'TWO TALES OF ONE SHARK,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.

WILD-FOWL SHOOTING.

A CALM autumn afternoon on the shores of the Bristol Channel. A man, with a gun by his side, is seated in most contemplative attitude, on a seaweed-covered rock.

The man is my intimate friend, Willie Blake, a true passage in whose life seems to me of sufficient interest to be related here, with only its truth and its possible warning effect as its apology. At this particular moment he was musing over his past life.

Truly, Willie's life had been a hard one. I do not mean hard so much in the actual sense of struggle for existence, endurance of privation, and daily toil; though our hero had had a fair share of all these.

He had travelled about a good deal in different parts of the world, frequently obtaining good commercial and other appointments, working them for a time most assiduously and conscientiously, in spite of an innate detestation for all kinds of work; but whenever, at the end of six months' or a year's toil, he saw himself with a few bank-notes in his *soi-disant* savings-box, then he would incontinently resign his appointment—often to his employer's sincere regret—and be off to woods and wilds with dear old rod and gun; for he was an enthusiastic lover of nature, and a keen sportsman. When his money was nearly spent, he would return sadly to the cities, and wait,

Micawber-like, for 'something to turn up.' In this he was lucky; he seldom had to wait long.

But of course this desultory system of alternate work and play was hardly the way to get on in the world; and Willie's few distant relatives—he had no near ones—would often shake their heads as they talked of him, and call him 'rolling-stone,' 'ne'er-do-weel,' and similar epithets, by which your true, hard business-man expresses his contempt for any life that is not dedicated heart and soul to Mammon-worship.

But Willie was now nearly thirty—I write of only a year ago—and he was beginning to feel, more keenly than ever, certain ardent cravings for affection, sympathy, and domestic comfort. For in this man's heart was a deep spring of rare tenderness, seeking only a fit object on which to lavish its treasures. Yet poor Willie, by his Bohemian mode of life, had effectually isolated himself from domestic and social relations. He had wandered over a great part of Europe, and visited many fair scenes in the New World, alternately making money and spending it; happy sometimes in successful sport, and yet often troubled with a strange aching at his heart when he saw men as young as himself, or even younger, with loving wives and prattling children.

Little children! How the man

loved them! Never wearied by their chattering, never tired of inventing babyish little games to amuse them, and himself always happy while he was making them so. Why did he stay on for another week, two years ago, at the rough little inn in the Peak, after heavy storms and continued rains had brought down such a flood as completely put a stop to the trout and grayling fishing which was the object of his holiday? Simply because his landlord had a golden-haired daughter of five, for whom Willie had conceived a great affection; and all day long they would play together; and often the fair child would climb on his knee, throw her little white arms round his neck, and say, in tones of genuine sincerity, 'I do love you; don't I?' Poor, simple, warm-hearted old Willie! If you are inclined to despise him, *ami lecteur*, better read no further.

By a strange fatality, Willie had hardly ever been thrown into the society of women of his own class.

From one or two bad samples he had seen at a distance, and judged—perhaps not altogether unjustly—to be intensely cold, proud, egotistical, and superficial, he had conceived a general distrust of the middle-class girls of the period. He was much more attracted to the simple, hearty, genuine daughters of the 'petite bourgeoisie.' He considered that, in the lower social scale, at any rate, the women were always far superior to the men. But his singular views on these points could hardly be said to have been founded on much actual experience; for fate had hitherto denied him feminine society, except that of a few of the predatory daughters of Bohemia, in France, and elsewhere, for some of whom he had occasionally had a passing fancy; yet always felt that his heart

demanding something they could not give, however much they might be flattered and touched by the respectful tenderness of the young Englishman—so different from the ribald vulgarity they were accustomed to. Over these memories we must not linger. Willie himself looked back on them with pain; and he was thinking, longingly, of possible affection; of some pure, fair young creature, yet to be met, on whom he might bestow all the warmth of his bright, loving nature, in the constant endeavour to make her life one of perfect happiness. He thought, foolishly and romantically, how delightful it would be to raise from the lower ranks of life some lovely and loving girl, who already had aspirations for brighter surroundings, and higher intellectual culture—aspirations which she would scorn the idea of gratifying at the expense of self-respect and fair fame; but which he, if fate should bring them together, would find the highest and purest pleasure in fulfilling.

Such were some of the dreamings that passed through the mind of Wild Willie—as he was often dubbed by his fellow clerks, more quiet and practical—as he sat on the rock, looking on to a flat expanse of mud, darkened here and there with patches of marine vegetation; its wet and shining surface tinged with a coppery hue by the setting of the October sun, where the waves of the Bristol Channel slowly advanced towards the crumbling sea-wall of which Willie's rock had once formed part.

A sound in the air, a welcome sound, a rustling of many distant wings, and quacking as of many ducks, called his attention back to his immediate surroundings.

'A flock of sheldrakes, by Jove!'

thought Willie, and he rose from his rock to watch the flight of the birds, as they passed in varying line, far out of range, towards the mouth of a muddy little river, half a mile off, where, though the light was already beginning to get somewhat indistinct, he fancied he saw them descend on to a favourite feeding-ground, where he had already found many a plump victim. So, with cautious tread, after knocking out his pipe, he walked swiftly onward in that direction. As he walks, let us take a good look at him. A fine, straight-made fellow is Willie Blake. Nearly six feet in height, with broad shoulders and full chest, curly brown hair, and long beard, large dark grey eyes, bright and honest, and a clear, wholesome, sun-bronzed complexion. He wears a low Scotch cap, a rough pilot jacket, flushing trousers, and huge sea-boots, nearly up to his thighs. A rough game-bag round his shoulders, and a good strong old double-barrelled muzzle-loader, capable of taking extra heavy charges, and deadly at long ranges, in his hand. When he had done the first quarter of a mile with the swift, swinging, noiseless stride he had learnt on far western prairies, he began to bend low, and walk still more carefully; soon he was on his hands and knees; and when he arrived within a hundred and fifty yards of where he judged the ducks to be, he lay flat on the beach below the sea-wall, and proceeded very slowly, in this somewhat difficult posture; avoiding, as he dragged himself onward, every bit of stick or dry sawed that looked brittle, every fragment of shell that might crackle beneath his weight.

Soon, peering very cautiously over a high rock, he felt that his persevering stalk was going to be

rewarded; for there, within fifty yards of him, were more than a dozen fine sheldrakes, peacefully feeding on a dark patch of succulent weed. So quiet had been his approach, that his presence was evidently unsuspected, and they actually fed towards him; so that most of them soon came ten yards nearer. Here was a grand chance, for two or three of them were in a line, within easy range. But Wild Willie was no 'pot-shot;' he clapped his hands; then came a loud fluttering and screaming, as the horrified birds rose wildly up, and then the sure and swift discharge of the trusty old brown barrels. Down dropped four birds with a pleasant 'thud, thud,' on to the beach beyond, while a fifth, hit in the body, managed to wing its way a hundred yards farther, and fell close to the advancing tide.

With a joyous shout the sportsman bounded after this last one, and here the huge boots did him good service, for he was soon knee-deep in clammy mud, and would have sunk still farther had he not rushed on as swiftly as possible. A moment later the bird, now quite dead, would have been carried away by the tide. He picked it up, and hastened back to collect the other four. His game-bag already contained a good sample of wild fowl, for the weather had been cold and stormy, and they were unusually numerous.

So he was obliged to carry this last crowning trophy in his hands, and glorious the big, heavy birds looked, with their dark wings, white breasts, and ruddy necks. He filled his little brown pipe, trudged away joyfully towards the town of C—, where the lamps were already beginning to glow in the autumn twilight; and, for a time, all his thoughts were of

sport, sporting, till he arrived at his dull little lodgings, and handed the magnificent game to his unsympathising landlady, a crusty, hard-featured, harsh-voiced old female, who looked with great disgust at the thick mud which covered his boots and parts of his clothes, and evidently had misgivings as to the trouble of plucking the birds.

So then poor Willie's imagination began to work, and he thought how much nicer it would have been to have been welcomed by a bonnie little wife, who would have said, he fondly imagined, something like this—'How late you are, you naughty boy! Do make haste and get into dry clothes and slippers, and make yourself cosy in the arm-chair, and tell me all about it. What! all these beautiful birds! You don't mean to say you really shot all these! What lovely creatures! You dear, darling, clever old Willie!'

Something affectionate and enthusiastic like this, followed in natural sequence by a warm kiss, would have been pleasant, certainly.

But Dame Watson only said—'Really, Mr. Blake, I do wonder how a gentleman can like to get into such a state with mud and muck for a lot of nasty, strong-flavoured birds, as the lot of 'em isn't worth a pound of beef-steak; and I think you might contrive to get a little more of the nasty mud off before you come into a respectable house!'

So poor, weary Willie, with a sigh that was partly for the imaginary wife, made a mild apology to the irate lodging-house keeper, took off the objectionable sea-boots in the passage, went to his solitary little room, and again mused mournfully, the delight he had felt in his glorious afternoon's

sport having almost disappeared in the chill of his reception, and the absence of any sympathising ear to listen to the recital he would so gladly have made of his adventures.

What young sportsman does not feel this need strongly, after an eventful day's shooting or fishing? Half our pleasure, after such a day, is to 'fight our battles o'er again,' with congenial and sympathising friends.

But in half an hour his dinner was on the table, and he felt a little better.

It was a nice little dinner, truly, and not likely to be less appreciated for being the direct produce of the rod and gun which adorned each side of the little fireplace. A fine grey mullet, caught in P— Harbour the day before, preceded a succulent little teal, which Willie had knocked over on the wing as it flew over the sea, and actually swum out for, like any retriever.

Dame Watson had many faults, but her detractors could not say that she was a bad cook. So the meal was a good one, moreover, the Guinness was comforting.

But still the young man's imagination, ever busy with impressions of his solitude and a fancied contrast, would cause him to see vividly, in his mind's eye, another chair at the opposite side of the little square table, tenanted by a fair young wife. And he sighed again, as he laid down knife and fork, and betook himself to the fireside and his pipe.

He inwardly complained of his lonely lot, and wondered why fate had denied him what he felt himself to be so well fitted for. Was it because his youth had been somewhat wild and wayward?

Scarcely so, for he had ever been more sinned against than sinning; and he knew many men,



WILLIE BLAKE

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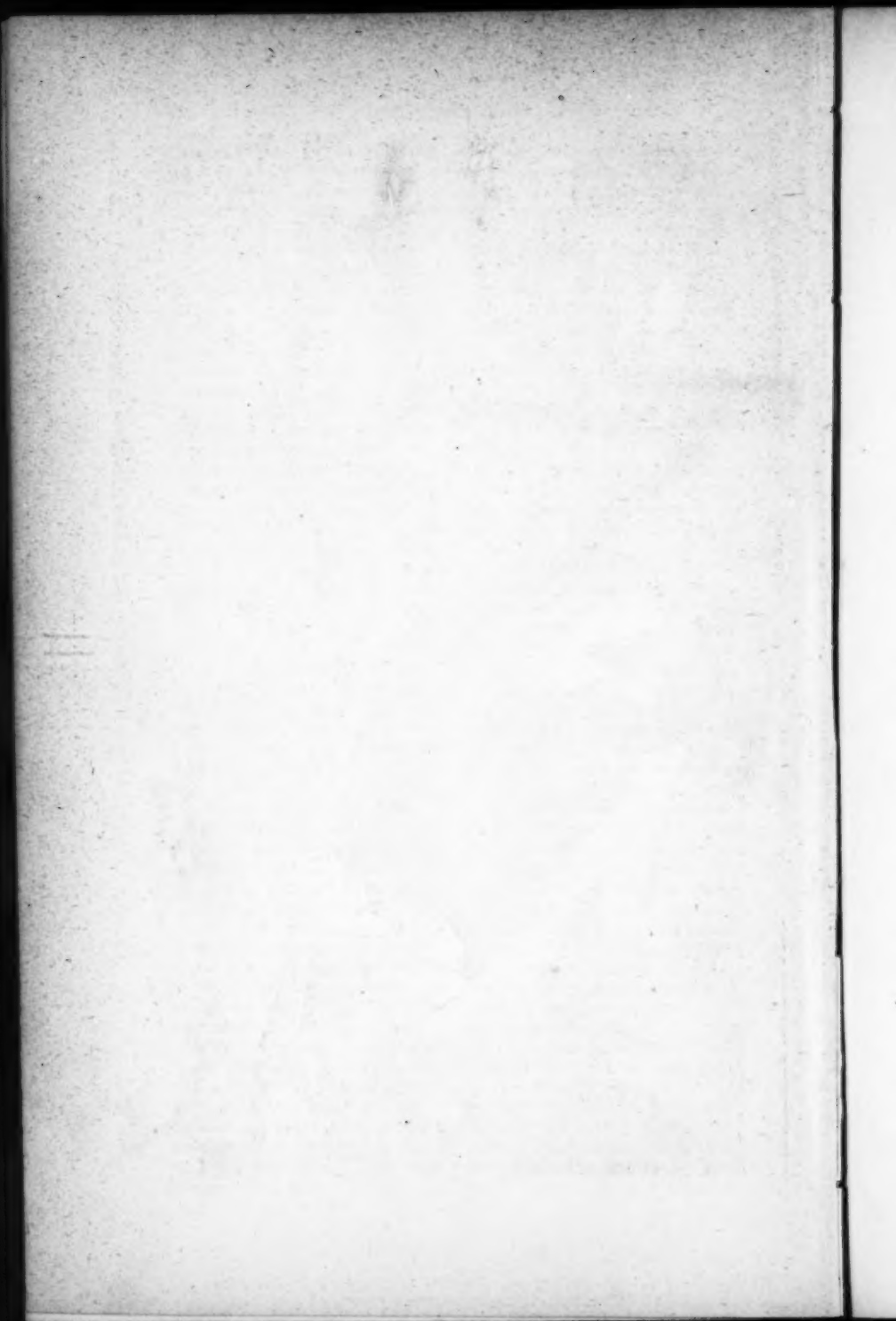
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Drawn by H. Johnson.

WILLIE BLAKE.



now comfortably established in real homes, who had managed in the past to conceal from the world's eye sins far graver than any of poor Willie's peccadilloes. Still, reasoning with himself, he found that if he had been less of a Bohemian, if he had persevered steadily in one course, dry and uncongenial though business might be to a nature like his, he would surely both have progressed by this time to the attainment of an income entitling him to marriage, or, at any rate, engagement, and would, in the meantime, have created for himself a circle of pleasant, social relations, wherein he might, long ere this, have found all that was now lacking.

But then, if he had done so, where would have been the travels, the adventures, and the bright reminiscences of wild sports in distant lands, which seemed to rise up pleasantly in his brain as the thin blue smoke from the little brown pipe curled gracefully up to mingle with the darker smoke from the fire? No, surely it was not too late yet; he had surely profited so well by the vicissitudes of his past life, as to be able to appreciate domesticity in a way he never otherwise could have done. And he was not so badly off, after all. He was getting two hundred a year as corresponding clerk in a London shipping house, where his knowledge of foreign languages and countries made him so valuable, that, with energy and perseverance, he might reasonably hope for speedy advancement. Ay, truly, that was the right thought, and he resolved that, at the expiration of his fortnight's holiday, of which only four days now remained, he would return to London, work very hard, endeavour to secure a good position in the

office, devote less time and money to sports and amusements, and seek, if possible, to get into a little quiet society. He might go and board, for example, with some 'cheerful, musical family,' as per advertisement!

A capital idea! He would, on his return, collect a few such advertisements, and go to look at a few of the families who offered such delightful homes for such very moderate remuneration. What if the landladies, in such case, might be match-making old ladies, desiring to get their 'cheerful, musical' daughters comfortably married? In the warmth of his heart, this big child of near thirty innocently thought that he should be only too delighted to marry any young lady, and that he could make any girl happy, unless she were really downright ugly, and possessed of a diabolical temper.

For Wild Willie, the kindest-hearted, best-tempered fellow in the world, had an utter horror of the opposite qualities. He also had a very great objection to solitude, so he soon adjourned to the smoking-room of a neighbouring hotel, where a few of the town tradesmen and neighbouring farmers used to meet to discuss, over their 'church-wardens' and evening grog, small local politics, sewage, the weather, and the crops, and other matters of dubious interest for a stranger. Blake had, even in this short time, become a decided favourite with this quiet little circle, the younger members of which were very fond of getting him to spin one of his numerous yarns anent foreign travel and adventure.

On this particular evening the room was honoured by the presence of no less a personage than the head gamekeeper of Lord T——, the richest nobleman and

largest landowner in the county. He listened with interest to the account of Willie's afternoon's sport among the wild fowl, and said, approvingly—

'You seem to have done uncommonly well, sir. I like to see a gentleman fond of real sport of any kind.'

'I suppose you see plenty,' returned Willie.

'Yes, indeed, we have got as fine a stock of game, I will say, as any estate in England. We mean killing a rare lot to-morrow.'

'Ay, how's that?'

'Why, the Duke of B——, and Lord H——, and one or two more, are coming over to shoot with my lord. We shall beat some of the best coverts, and I expect we shall find some seven or eight hundred head of pheasants, besides any quantity of hares and partridges in the open.'

'By Jove, I should like to see the sport! Would it be possible?'

'Possible, to be sure, sir; easy enough, if you don't mind joining the beaters.'

'Oh, I'm not proud, and I'm game for any amount of rough work.'

'That's all right then; but mind you put on rough old clothes, for you are sure to get them torn, and a pair of stout leggings, too; for some of our coverts are precious rough.'

'All right! Now where must I come to to-morrow morning, and what time?'

'You come straight to my house; I'll give you a plain direction how to find it. The beaters are to muster there at half-past ten, and their lordships will be on the ground shortly afterwards. I suppose you're not afraid of beginning the day with a five-mile walk?'

'No, nor ten, if needs be.'

'Well, then, there's a bit of a

chart that will show you the way as straight as a line. Now I must be off. No, thank you, sir; one glass of grog is my allowance. Good-night.'

'Good-night, Mr. Davies.'

CHAPTER II.

TAME-FOWL SHOOTING.

A GRAND autumn morning. Not a cloud in the sky, a warm sun rapidly drying the dew-moistened surface of the fields where lie the unconscious hares and partridges, of the mellow-tinted woods swarming with gorgeous pheasants, so many hundreds of which are destined to fall this day before the hot breech-loaders of the aristocratic sportsman. A few minutes before the appointed time, Willie Blake, looking none the worse for his walk, walked into a field adjoining Mr. Davies' house, where that important functionary and another keeper, resplendent in attire, and awe-inspiring in general appearance, were mustering the motley lot of farm labourers and idlers who were to go through the arduous duties of beaters for a small pecuniary consideration. He was distributing to each, as he answered to his name on the head keeper's memorandum book, a little bit of blue ribbon, which, affixed to hat, button-hole, or any conspicuous part of their rustic apparel, served to distinguish them from any of the unlicensed *profanum vulgus*, or general loafers, who might try to get into fields or coverts to see the sport.

'Good morning, Mr. Blake; you are punctual, I see,' said the man in authority.

'Good morning, Mr. Davies. Splendid day for the sport.'

'Capital! Do you mind wearing this rosette? All right. And, you know, you mustn't take offence

at being ordered about and shouted at. Keep by me for the present. Ah, Mr. Watson, delighted to see you! Going through the coverts with us? Capital! I remember how you went through the roughest bits last year. Some coverts would never have been thoroughly beaten but for you." This encomium was addressed to a handsome young farmer, about Blake's age, who was one of Lord T——'s principal tenants, and a very keen sportsman, working hard indeed to make his farm productive, but devoting the whole of his few leisure hours to horse, rod, and gun. 'This is my friend Mr. Blake, from London; fond of a bit of sport, like yourself. Come to see them kill my pheasants,' said the old keeper, with a pardonably egotistical use of the possessive pronoun. 'He says he's not afraid of hard work, so he can't do better than go with you.'

While awaiting the arrival of the shooting party, the two young men entered into interesting conversation on congenial subjects. The young farmer, who seemed exceedingly intelligent and well-educated, soon began to enlarge upon agricultural grievances.

He explained to Willie how annoying it was for him, as a farmer and a sportsman, to see the land he occupied under Lord T—— overrun with game, of which he dared not shoot a single head.

'Why, you'll hardly believe me, but I have counted as many as seventy hares in one of my fields. And every hedge-side is full of rabbits. I don't mind the pheasants and partridges—his lordship may keep as many of them as he likes—but it is the confounded ground game. The old hares and rabbits eat away nearly all the profit I can make out of the farm,

working as hard as I can, and not one may I touch.'

'But I thought rabbits were not game now?' remarked Willie.

'They are not, but there is a special clause in the lease, reserving them to the landlord; so it comes to the same thing. Fancy how it aggravates me, when I take my gun out to shoot a few of the larks that are tearing up my young wheat, or try for a plover or two, to see the hares sitting up and staring at me within easy range, and the blessed rabbits never whisking into their holes till I'm within twenty yards of them.'

'Awfully annoying, certainly I don't think I could help letting drive at one now and then.'

'That wouldn't do at any price. But you will wonder that, grumbling at the game as I do, I should be here to-day to beat, and help his lordship and his friends to shoot the game I feed for them. It is from pure love of sport. If I can't shoot myself, I like to see others shoot. Here they come. We shall have some rough work soon. Glad you've got the right sort of togs on. No, better not smoke now; it is hardly the thing before lunch.'

Soon, each of the distinguished sportsmen, in elegant costume, with his two loaders behind him, carrying spare guns and good supply of cartridges, was *en route* for his post outside the first little covert. Then the line of beaters, marshalled by the anxious old keeper, entered said covert, and crashed their way laboriously through it, Blake and Watson bravely taking the part nearest to the outside, which was much the thickest and roughest. Soon could be heard from keepers, loaders, and others, such cries as 'Hare to the right, my lord!' 'Rabbit on the left, your grace!' and 'Over!' as the gorgeous pheasants, startled

from their dignified strutting, flew hastily out of the covert, right over the expectant gunners.

So it went on, with quick cracking of guns in all directions, until the beaters got nearly to the end of the covert.

They had kept well in line, and maintained a constant clattering with their sticks, to prevent the pheasants—scores of which had not yet risen, but were running before them—from doubling back. So this corner, in front of which were posted the Duke of B—— and Lord T——, now contained a great quantity of game, which soon began to rise in 'bouquets,' said 'bouquets' resembling fireworks more than flowers, as the brilliant jewelled plumage of some hundred pheasants at once flashed up in the bright sunlight, to the accompaniment of rapid firing and clouds of smoke. There was a heavy contribution to the game-cart, the beaters emerged, and formed themselves into a line across some stubbles, which the whole party crossed, and which yielded many hares and partridges. Then another covert, still rougher than the last, with a bigger 'bouquet.' Then a bog, through which the beaters floundered knee-deep; then more stubble, and so on to lunch-time.

Let us take a glance at the preparations. On the lawn, in front of the under keeper's house, is erected a large marquee, bearing the name of Edgington, wherein is a long table, adorned with much lordly silver and cut glass, and flowers, and many kinds of wine-glasses—graced, moreover, by the presence of 'the ladies,' at whom Willie glances, without feeling either the awe or admiration which are expressed in the countenances of the rustics, called forth, probably, more by the wondrous costumes of these aristocratic dames

than by pre-eminent beauty of form or feature.

And long rows of hares, pheasants, partridges, rabbits, and 'various,' are laid out on the grass to be counted—an imposing array. The tired beaters, hot, muddy, and bramble-torn, are ranged along the side of a wall, to receive each his hunch of bread and cheese and mug of beer; while, in the yard of the house keepers, loaders, and a few tenants are helping themselves to a substantial 'snack;' for there is a huge joint of cold beef, a bushel of potatoes in their jackets, plenty of big loaves of bread, and two barrels of sound ale. Willie Blake and his new friend, Watson, were making a hearty lunch in the yard, after being congratulated by the head keeper on the gallant manner in which they had gone through the rough work of the morning. The duke's loader, Mr. Peters, who had also remarked the two young men, and was hob-nobbing with Lord H——'s valet, came up and politely offered them a glass of excellent sherry.

While drinking it, Blake's eyes chanced to wander carelessly through a neighbouring window, which was that of the kitchen of the keeper's house. Something he saw behind said window caused him almost to drop his glass—and he certainly blushed! What was it? Only a face, and one he had never seen before.

But such a face! Such big, deep black eyes; such a wild profusion of rich dark-brown hair; such a pretty pert little *nez retroussé*, and such sweet red, pouting, kissable-looking lips—that Willie felt, as he afterwards expressed it, more forcibly than elegantly, 'struck all of a heap.' And, did his senses deceive him, or did the lovely apparition blush and half smile at Blake before she turned her pretty

head away? We fancy she did and are not at all surprised at it; for certainly Willie was the handsomest man in the yard among the gay crowd of farmers, keepers, and valetaille.

Our hero, with all the sudden ardour of his warm, impulsive nature, said to himself, 'What a glorious girl! How I could love her! I wonder if I could contrive to speak to her!' And he turned to Watson, and asked him, in careless tone, 'Who is that girl in yonder, with the black eyes? She is not bad-looking.'

'Oh, you mean Maggie Davies, the head keeper's daughter. She's come over here to help to-day. She is reckoned one of the prettiest lasses in these parts, and all the young chaps are crazed after her.'

'I don't wonder at it.'

Just then Mr. Watson was called away by Lord T——'s under steward, to help count the game, that he might report the numbers to the party in the marquee. Willie conceived an absurd idea for getting speech of the rustic beauty—an idea that could hardly have occurred to any one else in the world. Her father, the head keeper, had approached the corner where the provisions were, and was helping himself to a substantial slice of beef. Blake took a knife, and began cutting a piece of bread for him, when, by premeditated awkwardness, he made a slip, and inflicted a severe gash on his left thumb.

'Why, what are you about, Mr. Blake?' said Davies. 'Come, you must have that bound up at once. I can't afford to lose my best volunteer. Come inside. My daughter Maggie's a capital hand at anything of that sort.' Artful Willie was nothing loath, you may be sure. 'Here, Maggie, my wench, get a bit of clean rag, quick, and bind this young gentleman's hand

up. Don't be afraid, lass, he won't bite you; and he's not going to bleed to death, neither.'

For the lovely girl was blushing and trembling most needlessly, as she approached, with basin and linen rag, to perform the simple operation. What a wonderful expression of respectful admiration did the rascal contrive to throw into those dark grey eyes of his, as he said—

'A thousand thanks, Miss Davies! A man might wish for a much severer wound, to be tended by *your* hands.'

Pretty Maggie, generally ready enough with her tongue, and capable of making very smart retorts to the blundering compliments of her rustic admirers, somehow could not find words to reply; but when Willie added, 'I hope we shall meet again,' her looks seemed to say pretty plainly that she hoped so too. It really seemed to be a case of love at first sight with the pair of them.

But soon the shooting party was off again to fresh coverts. And still Blake and Watson took the roughest bits, and went into places that the hired beaters obstinately shirked. In one covert, particularly, just at the outside, the tangled mass of natural and artificial undergrowth was so thick that it was impossible to walk either on it, or through it; yet these two charged it, flung themselves on it, rolled over a little way, sunk down among elders and brambles, up again, another jump, another roll, and so on—to the vast amusement of four stately dames who were now walking with the gunners in the field on the outside of the covert, and the great satisfaction of the keepers, who had hardly ever succeeded in getting this spot thoroughly beaten before. Willie glanced at the haughty ladies, whose dresses made the gorgeous

plumage of the birds running before him look tame and sober by comparison, and he thought that Maggie was ten times prettier than any of these aristocrats, and wished that she were there to see him work. And all the time, as they went on, amid much shouting and clattering of sticks, and the encouraging cries of the keepers—'Good lads on the right!—into it!—good lads! Well done, Mr. Blake! Well done, Mr. Watson!'—only very few pheasants flew out; and an inexperienced spectator would have thought this plantation was nearly empty. But the birds, confiding in the almost impenetrable thickness of the undergrowth, ran on before the beaters until they were driven into the extreme corner, and then they rose—first by twos and threes, then by dozens, and at last literally by hundreds, falling thickly on to the ploughed land outside, or plumping down into the covert among the beaters, as the guns kept up a continuous fire, and the busy loaders could hardly hand the hot weapons quickly enough to their excited masters. What a massacre! But as to its being *sport*, Willie thought he preferred his long, cold, muddy stalks after duck or curlew, something really wild, to this wholesale slaughter of hand-fed birds, many of which had to be hit by the

sticks of the beaters before they would rise, knowing well what doom awaited them when they showed themselves above the young fir-trees. Then came more stubble, then more bog, where two or three snipe were bagged at long ranges, eliciting Willie's approbation; then another 'warm corner,' and by the time they had finished shooting this last, the shades of evening were beginning to fall over fields and plantations, nature seemed universally to demand repose, and soon the sportsmen drove away on Lord T——'s four-in-hand, amid cheers from tenants and beaters.

Blake went with Watson to help in the counting, and they found 858 pheasants, 330 hares, about 150 rabbits, ditto partridges, 2 woodcocks, 5 snipe, and 17 'various,' the latter including some waterhens, a wood-pigeon or two, and a big, tawny, semi-wild cat, whose tail one of the keepers cut off, that he might claim the usual reward for its destruction as 'vermin.'

Willie was naturally rather tired, and did not much relish the idea of walking back to C——. He had two invitations to stay the night, one from Farmer Watson, the other from Mr. Davies, both of whom had taken a great liking to him. We leave the reader to guess which he accepted.

(To be continued.)



THE TALK OF THE TOWN.

CHRISTMAS is close upon us again. Without intruding upon the special province of the preacher, we may venture to remark, that this season appears to come round uncommonly quick. Ah, what a sad fate it is, that as we grow older, the wings of time vibrate with increased velocity, and the seasons succeed each other much more hastily than of yore, and the month that is coming treads upon the heels of the month that is going, with an impatient rudeness we do not remember to have experienced in earlier times.

Another reflection forces itself upon us. Christmas does not seem to be the same that it used to be. In our youth we hailed it as a 'merry time,' as something to be looked forward to for itself alone. We felt happy, eminently cheerful, and enthusiastic at the thought. Why is it that we seem to regard it with such coldness now? Is it that the fire of enthusiasm has ceased to burn brightly, and that it costs us an effort to rake up the embers, and that we feel compelled to use some stimulating bellows each time if we would raise a flame or make the ashes glow? Or is it that our life has become so practical, our occupations so absorbing, that we positively have no spare moments for the indulgence of the soft, poetic feeling we once enjoyed so much when we gathered round the fire upon long winter evenings, and experienced no misgivings as to wasted moments, as we idly talked and laughed and fell in love and out again? The howling winter wind that roared around the country house and filled us with a strange delight; the sleet that

rattled against the window-panes, as if in angry protest against the mirth that laughed in-doors; the bright and piercing frost that bade us look up our skates and sleighs; why cannot we enjoy these aspects of Nature as we did a decade past? The plain fact is, increasing years and toil inevitably bring with them that inexorable life-shortener, Anxiety; and it is this that silences the merry sound of laughter, and jars the music of the Christmas chimes.

One of the most charming little books that I have met with lately, is called 'The Secret of Long Life,' and I earnestly advise everybody who has not yet read it, to do so at once. There is a careless repose about the style, an ineffable good-humour spread through every page, a detestation of bores and anxiety, combined with a hearty resolution to shun both; a comfortable self-reliance, and a genial habit of making the best of things, and not the worst, that make me yearn for the acquaintance of the author. Mark the recapitulation of his argument; it is simply delicious: 'The first element of longevity is the Idea; the second, Independence; the third, Indolence. Keep the spirit open to all impressions; avoid all unnecessary connections, political or otherwise; learn to be lazy. These things achieved, you may make a mark on the world; you will certainly enjoy life; you may possibly live so long as to be an archaeological curiosity. Idea—Independence—Indolence—a modern triad—they combine the two mysteries of happiness and longevity—whereof the latter depends on the former. Look at it. A

constant current of ideas keeps the brain joyous and resourceful. A perfect spirit of independence makes a man devoid of fear, and enables him to walk erect, not only among poets and philosophers, but among kings and emperors, and other inferior personages. And a knowledge of what indolence means has a twofold delight, for it enables a man to live voluptuously while he thinks profoundly.' How easy the lesson seems to learn! How facile the acquisition and enjoyment of a century of years! Have I ideas? Well, I believe I have a notion or two, occasionally. But have I independence? Ah, good my master, how am I to have a perfect spirit of independence, and how am I to learn to be lazy, if the harsh necessities of existence compel me to continual toil? An unhappy queen once wondered why her starving subjects did not eat *brioche*, and I am afraid that the writer of this brief little book assumes, as a postulate, that he who would acquire long life must be started with a comfortable balance at his bankers; and his work—the evolution and publication of his ideas—is merely for the purpose of increasing that balance, and stocking his cellars with 'liquid sunshine' from the banks of the Rhine, the Marne, and the Charente. Besides, what are we to do with the thousand ills that flesh is heir to? No doubt, the man who has a busy mind, where he perpetually churns ideas, has no time for the contemplation of his health, and leaves pills and change of air for the solace of the sorry valetudinarian; such an one has no time to speculate upon the probable state of his liver, or whether this dish is too rich, or that particular wine is likely to agree with him; but there are ailments which, unfortunately, are

hereditary, and uncontrollable physical sufferings which may compel the most brilliant ideologist amongst us to thank God that the allotted days of man are but threescore years and ten. Long life is only desirable, nay, only tolerable, on the presumption of almost perfect health, and immunity from pain. One life-shortener there is, however, which any man with strong will may certainly avoid, and that is, anxiety. Of all the idle speculations in the world, the most profitless is perpetual worrying as to what to-morrow may bring forth. Perhaps the most needless of man's woes is disappointment. Some men live in a perpetual state of expectation, and if their own prophecies are not fulfilled to the letter, they allow themselves to sink into a temporary slough of despair, compared with which a week's sojourn at the Slough Station on the Great Western Railway would be a paradise indeed, which is saying a great deal. (This is not in the least intended for a joke. Go to Slough Station, and try.) Why should we be for ever worrying ourselves as to the possible results of our actions? If I deliberately perform a certain act, I presume that I have done my best under the circumstances, and what is the use of bothering myself into wrinkles and grey hairs because I cannot control the future? Things will turn out unexpectedly, and everybody knows it. Why, then, this harrowing care of disappointment? The fact is, the majority of mankind will make the worst of things, and not the best. Listen to people abusing the weather. There is no such unpardonable abuse of speech, or monstrous waste of time, as to grumble at the rain or snow. Such language may be all very

suitable for the bad quarter of an hour when waiting for dinner; it is then purely conventional, and means nothing. But to stand at the door or window and wonder whether the rain is ever going to begin, or whether it is ever going to end, and to complain of Nature because one or the other alternative does not forthwith commence, is ludicrously absurd. You may depend upon it that the man who is perpetually tapping his barometer, and wondering if it will be fine to-morrow, or a frost to-night, is an empty-headed noodle, fit only for a cycle of Cathay.

The worst of the book I am referring to is the suspicion its general tone engenders, when one comes to think about it, viz., that the author—delightful acquaintance as I am sure he must be—is, at the bottom, an eminently selfish man. Should these lines meet his eye, I trust he will forgive me, for I am bound to say that we live in an eminently selfish age. Still, it is pleasant to hope that some amongst us live a little for the happiness of others, and experience forces us to believe that no enjoyment is perfect that is not shared by some one else. Even if we 'claim and obtain our century,' may we not find the 'isolated position,' of which the author speaks so proudly, a little hard to bear? May we not find our ideal independent indolence grow somewhat cold as we touch the verge where we know our well-directed feet must stumble at the last? But I am forgetting myself—this is to speculate on to-morrow, and to-morrow must take care for itself.

From perusing the 'Secret of Long Life,' one turns naturally to Hawthorne's posthumous work, 'Septimius, a Romance of Immortality.' 'Zanoni,' and 'A Strange

Story,' prove how strongly such a theme can lay hold of a brilliant and imaginative mind. Small minds shriek frantically for the Elixir of Life, in order that they may escape from the terrors of the unknown and unknowable; great minds have earnestly thought about it in the hope that they may indefinitely prolong the earthly existence of intellects the world cannot well afford to lose. Lovers of high and poetic romance may well regret that one of the most creative romancists of the age did not live to complete the rough sketch we see in 'Septimius.' An intelligent and sympathetic reviewer remarks, that possibly the author may have intended this 'Romance of Immortality' as a grim, yet fascinating satire on a subject which even the most practical minds are not unaccustomed to entertain; and the canons of longevity laid down in the bleared manuscript Septimius with such difficulty construed, show at once how little the man who would abide by them could enjoy the gift they promised. According to these rules, everything must be sacrificed to self. The happiness of others becomes a disturbing element, and love is absolutely fatal. Given a race of Methuselahs upon such terms as these, and commonplace folk (and the world is made up of such units) would not be indisposed to consider death as decidedly preferable to chilly centuries of Stoic life. When Thomas Aquinas seized the hammer and knocked on the head the brazen image which he and his master, Albertus Magnus, had created, because of its garrulity which irritated him to such an excessive degree, the pious doctor was probably entirely convinced of the un wisdom of poaching on the preserves of Nature, and the fable bears its moral through all time.

Arnold de Villeneuve, who flourished in the thirteenth century, is said, according to Dr. Mackay, to have left the following receipt for ensuring a length of years considerably surpassing the period which is generally supposed to be a green old age. The person wishing to prolong his life almost indefinitely must rub himself well two or three times a week with the juice or marrow of cassia. Every night, on going to bed, he must put upon his heart a plaster, composed of a certain quantity of Oriental saffron, red rose leaves, sandal wood, aloes, and amber, liquefied in oil of roses and the best white wax. In the morning he must take it off, and enclose it carefully in a leaden box till the next night, when it must be again applied. If he be of a sanguine temperament, he is to take sixteen chickens; if phlegmatic, twenty-five; and if melancholy, thirty; these he is to put in a yard where the air and the water are pure. Upon these he is to feed, eating one a day; but these chickens have to be fattened by a peculiar method, which will impregnate their flesh with the qualities that are to produce longevity in the eater; for, being deprived of all other nourishment till they are almost dying of hunger, they are to be fed upon broth made of serpents and vinegar, thickened with wheat and bran. After two months of such diet they will be fit for the intending Methuselah's table, and are to be washed down with good hock or claret. Fancy living for a few centuries on eternal chicken! Possibly the serpents and vinegar might render that domestic fowl palatable for fifty years or so, but surely it would produce a most unhealthy nausea in time. Besides, the experimentalist would have to catch his serpents, and a single bite

might interfere unpleasantly with the theory. On the whole, I am inclined to think that we do pretty well as we are; and if we desire to live reasonably long, we shall achieve our end by the simpler rules of common sense.

Will Christmas fade away, I wonder, in the days to be? Will the twenty-fifth of December be any more than quarter day in the calendar of the golden year? Will people ever be amazed at the genial enthusiasm and generous warmth that inspired 'A Christmas Carol'? Will they be able by-and-by to unfold the great parable of Scrooge, and Marley's ghost, without reference to the reviews contained in ancient journals? Will learned works be written on, and one-ideaed archaeologists be busy with, the word that now has such deep significance to many of us, though I am bound to add that its full appreciation is already lost to multitudes. Mr. Winwood Reade, an able writer, but one whose powers seem scarcely co-extensive with his ambition, tells us in his discursive work, 'The Martyrdom of Man,' that there is little hope for the human race if Christianity is not speedily abolished. If this mild suggestion is carried out, we presume that all relics of the old superstition will be abolished, root and branch, by the stern apostles of the new reformation, and Christmas Day will become a term forbidden to be used under the severest penalties. If some eccentric Purchas delights to scandalize his age by decking his abode with holly and mistletoe, he will be seized upon by some association, and held up to public hatred, contempt and ridicule, and possibly be condemned to penal servitude for his sins against the enlightenment of the age,

which will suffer no memory of the past to cast a shadow over the liberation of mankind from the thralldom of what were called religious creeds. The Chatterton of the period will have his licence immediately withdrawn, should he, having searched for novelties among the dusty records of Drury Lane, advertise a Grand Christmas Pantomime. No shows of Christmas beef will gladden the eyes of weary workers as they homeward wend; no Christmas turkey dangle from the poulterers' hooks; no Christmas goose club display its placards in the windows of the public house; no Christmas trees to disturb the intellectual progress of the priggish children; no Christmas boxes for the panting postmen. Well, if this is to be so in the glorious future that awaits mankind, before we are all absorbed into what Mr. Winwood Reade calls the great Human Mind, which exists somewhere or other like a phantom ogre, why, the sooner we go in for the martyrdom of man on an extensive scale the better. Let us call on our prophet and ask for aureoles, and request permission to follow him to the stake without delay. Let us cheerfully agree with him that we are only tolerably refined monkeys, and call upon Paget and Thompson to unfurl our tails for us and let us go free, and see how we like it when we enter the gigantic jaws in which, we are told, we are to be utterly annihilated.

Time is very valuable in these days, and every minute is composed of money just as it is of seconds; and as we should grapple time by the forelock, so we should pounce upon the grains of gold that in one form or another glide past us as the hands of the chronometer move steadily on. But I must confess to having

honestly read Mr. Winwood Reade's book from beginning to end without having gained a pennyworth by my labour. It was not until I reached the five hundred and forty-third page, that I discovered the meaning of the sensational title. 'I give to universal history,' says Mr. Winwood Reade, 'a strange but true title—*The Martyrdom of Man*. In each generation the human race has been tortured, that their children might profit by their woes. Our own prosperity is founded on the agonies of the past. Is it, therefore, unjust that we should also suffer for the benefit of those who are to come?' If this clever writer had not been the victim of a fatal fluency, would he not have seen how completely he contradicts himself? Admitting our prosperity, he entirely demolishes the notion of martyrdom. What his argument really amounts to is this—each succeeding age is better than the last. We get on very tolerably well, but posterity, profiting by our experiences, and being duly warned by our mistakes, will get on very much better. I can only say that this is the pleasantest definition of martyrdom I ever heard of. I always understood that a martyr was a man who would give up his life in defence of a principle which he, rightly or wrongly, entertained under solemn conviction of its truth. But it is an abuse of language to say that one generation is martyred for the succeeding one. In fact, it is absolute nonsense. The individual members of one generation leave off wiser than they began, and fathers hand on their experiences to their sons without the smallest feeling of anything so great as martyrdom. So far from this being an agonizing struggle upon

their part, they are only too happy to sink to rest with the satisfactory thought that their lives have not been in vain. The inventor of any acknowledged social improvement pockets the money he makes by his patent, and leaves his children in a state of opulence. No doubt he may have had in his time hard work, but work is man's glory and not his misery. It is only right that I should quote Mr. Winwood Reade's concluding words, for they appear to sum up the object for which his book is written:— 'Famine, pestilence, and war, are no longer essential for the advancement of the human race. But a season of mental anguish is at hand, and through this we must pass, in order that our posterity may rise. The soul must be sacrificed; the hope in immortality must die. A sweet and charming illusion must be taken from the human race, as youth and beauty vanish never to return.' If, indeed, the soul is to be sacrificed, and the hope in immortality must die, we may not unnaturally inquire what is there for posterity to rise to? Is the mental anguish we are to endure to result in nothing but the apotheosis of luxury? Has the busy intellect of the age in which we live no triumphs in store but those that can be measured by sensual enjoyment? Shall the soul be sacrificed upon a barren altar, erected to no God, and surrounded merely by a few quasi-utilitarian priests? Shall the hope in immortality—the innate conviction of the intellect the least and most profound—perish for the sake of the material prosperity of generations of Sybarites? Shall Plato be annihilated that he may give place to Lucullus? Think again, Mr. Winwood Reade; if the soul is to be sacrificed, is

there anything left worth rising to?

But our author candidly tells us in his preface that he has taken 'not only facts and ideas, but phrases and even paragraphs from other writers,' and he gives us a list of the individuals to whom he is indebted. Possibly, then, a wider range of reading, and a familiarity with writers who hold opposing views, may, in the course of time, give Mr. Reade occasion to modify his theories. At present, he pins what faith he has on the pages of Mr. Darwin. He assumes the irrefragable truth of the principles and convictions of the author of the 'Descent of Man.' He appears to have entered upon his study of that work with a determination to believe in it; and he seems to have silenced his own critical powers as he followed in the footsteps of his master. It may be, nay, we cannot doubt it, that the earth holds secrets which as yet are but partially revealed, and to the elucidation of which the clues as yet are but faint. If man's history is embedded in the hidden rocks, and his origin concealed beneath the depths of the sea, we may well believe that geology has yet greater triumphs in store, and we may be content that now the most scientific among us are but as 'children crying for the light.' A thoughtful writer in the current number of the 'Westminster Review,' concludes an article on Mr. Darwin's book with these pregnant words: 'He is a bold man who, testing Mr. Darwin's facts and arguments, believes in man's descent from the animal kingdom. He is a bolder who, resting on the evidence of ignorance, ventures to hold any other opinion.'

Mr. Reade tells us in his preface that there are passages in his book which his friends endea-

voured to persuade him to suppress, lest they should provoke against him 'the anger of the public.' It is certainly difficult not to admire the courage which bade him act according to his own convictions, though undoubtedly he has a way of treating modern religious belief which may startle, and annoy, and shock. But it is obvious to the most superficial thinker upon such higher matters, that no principle that is worth possession can be withdrawn from the realms of searching criticism or biting satire. If Christianity now has to pass through intellectual fires, if its professors have to be subjected to mental tortures which are not unworthy to be placed beside the brief agonies of the martyrs of the Coliseum, it has not the smallest reason to complain. By its endless divisions, its internecine strife, its practical denial of its own first principle—charity, it has compelled a selfvivisection beneath which it must succumb or conquer. The old-world fulminations of a papal syllabus, the new article of faith which has been recently imposed upon two hundred millions of Christians, cannot cross the path of educated intellect without a challenge. The dictates of a questionable authority must be subjected to the laws of reason, and the demand for unhesitating faith *will* be met with the cold interrogatory—why? It is far better that honest men should speak out their minds, than that their silence should cover a moral fraud. Freedom of speech, freedom of inquiry—thus, and thus only, can the truth be ultimately made clear. How much better, too, for those who doubt, that they should not keep their dreary hopelessness pent within their own sad bosoms, for, by revealing

their despair, some physician may be found to give them comfort. Who can peruse the following words of Mr. Winwood Reade, when describing the early Christian hope of immortality, without feeling a pang of sympathy? 'Ah, sweet fallacious hope of a barbarous and poetic age! Illusion still cherished, for mankind is yet in its poetic youth. How easy it would be to endure without repining the toils and troubles of this miserable life, if indeed we could believe that, when its brief period was passed, we should be united to those whom we have loved, to those whom death has snatched away, or whom fate has parted from us by barriers cold and deep and hopeless as the grave. If we could believe this, the shortness of life would comfort us—how quickly the time flies by!—and we should welcome death. But we do not believe it, and so we cling to our tortured lives, dreading the dark nothingness, dreading the dispersal of our elements into cold unconscious space.'

There is a bitter sadness about such unbelief as this that impels us by reason or by instinct, which you will, to emphatically deny the truth of the sweeping assertion that we do *not* believe in immortality. 'Spirits of the wise and good,' writes a disciple of pure theism, 'are ye not worth preserving in the sight of God?' And as we know that no particle of matter perishes, and that nothing is so small, so insignificant, as to be wholly lost, so, Christian or not, we may well believe that the soul, spirit, mind of man are absolutely indestructible. Death is but the climax of disease, and the natural conditions with which we are surrounded are now but in the infancy of their explanation. Science has

wonders yet in store beside which the inventions of our age will seem to posterity as poor and clumsy, and it may be that we are stumbling on the threshold of discoveries which await us beyond the portal of the world of spirits. 'There are fairer visions for these eyes to see, and paths more glorious for these feet to tread.' Does not, indeed, Mr. Reade himself confess it, when he goes on to say: 'As drops in the ocean of water, as atoms in the ocean of air, as sparks in the ocean of fire within the earth, our minds do their appointed work, and serve to build up the strength and beauty of the one great Human Mind which grows from century to century, from age to age, and is, perhaps, itself a mere molecule within some higher mind.' What is the meaning of this allegory, if it does not point to a future of some kind somewhere?

I cannot forbear quoting, as a contrast, the sentiments on this subject of the light-hearted author of the 'Secret of Long Life.' He asks, 'What is life?' and replies, 'We can approximate to a solution of this problem only through another. What is man? My answer is, a living indestructible spirit, inhabiting a material form which that spirit itself moulds and develops. Man possesses life so long as the atoms of his material form remain in their place; when they wear out, the spirit recommences its work, moulding for itself a new tenement. . . . High

thoughts and noble impulses give light to the eye, music to the voice, life to the lips, grace to the form. A long series of thoughts and impulses makes the soul stronger for its next effort; and the poet or sage who leaves this world (to write vaguely) after a great career, will renew his youth, and reappear on this or some other scene, with a fairer form than ever, and with greater power to ascend towards the infinite summit of existence. Where we shall pass the immeasurable future is no concern of ours. . . . As to the locality of our future—why, the universe is very wide, and if space be an immense cone, as would appear from the prevalence of ellipse and hyperbola in planetary and cometary motion, it must be long indeed before the best of us approach its apex. About such matters it is unwise to speculate. Indeed, when we have the most important truths that concern life in our possession, idle speculation about accidentals is infantile. We know *what* we are. Why should we guess as to *where* we are going? The soul is, and it consciously possesses faculties infinitely improvable. Fears and fancies of the future will therefore be dismissed by all whose intellectual health is sound; they will enjoy the instant, knowing that this is the true way to secure enjoyment of the unknown and unguessable future.'

Such be thy gods, O Philosophy!

FREE LANCE.

END OF VOL. XXII.

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